

3の素晴らしい
素晴らしい
世界に6
祝福を!

六花の
王女

暁

なつめ

Illustration
三嶋くろね



六花の
女王

この素晴らしい
世界に6
祝福を!

◆ ダクネス ◆

無礼を働くなよ？ 言葉遣い一つで
本当に首が飛びかねんからな？

◆ アクア ◆

とっておきの宴会芸で
盛り上げてみせるわ。
そう、ダクネスが恥を
かかない様にね！

私も紅魔族流の
派手な登場で、
お姫様を驚かせて
みせましょう。

◆ めぐみん ◆

下賤の者、王族をあまり不躰に見るものではありません。
それよりも、早く挨拶と冒険譚を。

お兄様には、その、
私の遊び相手と申しますか……。

✧ アイリス ✧

私、あなたの様な人に
会ったのは初めてなんです。



❁ クリス ❁



今から王女様のところへ
遊びに行かない？

❁ エリス ❁



どうか、神器の回収をお願いできませんか？

義賊……。ちよつとだけ懂れてしまいます。

Prologue

That day.

After waking up, I didn't plan to get down from my soft bed, but clapped my hands instead.

This was to summon the butler before the door.

The one who appeared was an elderly man with white hair wearing the attire of a butler.

“What can I do for you, Kazuma-dono.”

I said to the elderly man bowing deeply at me.

“Could I trouble you to prepare some coffee to freshen me up, Sebastian?”

“It's Heidel.”

“Thank you, Heidel.”

After asking for coffee from the butler Hitler, I laid down onto my bed again.

The maid Mary will come and change the sheets later.

However, I couldn't let her change the sheets so easily.

I had to obstruct the maid in all sorts of way to stop her from completing her work.

This was the way to treat maids, taught to me by a certain crusader.

Finally, there was a knocking on the door.

Look, here she comes.

My personal maid, Mary...

Gifting our Bright Future with Cheers!

Part 1

I had been traveling around a lot lately, so the mansion I missed so much had collected a bit of dust.

Sitting cross legged in the center of the soft carpet, I thought back about the events that happened several days ago.

— The sacred ground of Arch wizards, the place that produced lots of excellent mages, Home of the Crimson Magic.

From that place came a letter detailing the last words and reports of an attack by the demon king army, which was delivered into the hands of a certain girl.

Although she knew she wouldn't be of much help even if she went alone, that girl still made up her mind to return home.

Knowing that she wouldn't be able to visit this town ever again, that girl confessed to me the feelings hidden in her heart, requesting me to become one with her before she headed toward certain death.

I rejected her resolution, and left the sorrowful girl behind and set off on a journey.

That's right, in order to take out the demon king army myself before that girl arrived...

Many things happened after that, but the demon king army boss blah was defeated because of my actions, and peace returned to the Home of the Crimson Magic. However—

“... Kazuma had been grinning by himself disgustingly for a while now. It is spring now, it can't be helped if he turns dumb.”

After we return to Axel, we continued living peacefully.

Darkness, Megumin, and Aqua who said something demeaning about me were sitting harmoniously on the couch in the living room, taking turns playing the portable game console we brought back from the Home of the Crimson Magic.

Coming back to my senses, I turned to those three and said with a serious face.

“I want a younger sister.”

— After hearing what I said, the room became silent.

And then...

“Hey Darkness, we have to take turns alright? I'm next right? I will be the one to defeat the final boss.”

“No wait, didn't Aqua and Megumin took out the boss in real life? At least let me finish it in the game.”

“No, as a member of the Crimson Magic, we won't back down on the issue of dealing the final blow. And the final boss is definitely a powerful foe. If we let the bumbling Darkness do it, we will need to try several times again before defeating it.”

The three of them seem to be ignoring me as they squabble over the order they will play the game.

“Listen to me ahhhhh!”

“Waahhhhh! Stop it, we are about to beat the game! Everybody spent so much time to finally reach this stage!”

I snatched the game and kept playing while dodging Aqua who tried to take it back...

“Here, I beat the boss with no damage! Are you happy now!?”

“Not happy at all, why did you snatch it at the most crucial part!! How are you going to compensate all our effort to reach this stage!? We spent three whole days to make it here!”

“Shut up, just give me the game again. It will take me about three hours to arrive to the same point with no damage.”

“Stop, no! Don’t trample our efforts!”

Aqua snatched the console back in tears.

“I thought your performance in the Home of the Crimson Magic wasn’t bad, but deep inside, you are still a jerk! Does mocking our efforts make you happy!? Megumin, say something too!!”

When Megumin heard Darkness’ agitated speech, she replied: “... Eh, well, he was the only one excluded so that’s kind of pitiful. At the Home of the Crimson Magic or in the past, Kazuma would be dependable at the very end. What happened just now was sort of like our style, right?”

“Eh!?” x2

Aqua and Darkness shrieked in surprise, looking back and forth between me and Megumin.

“Wait, Megumin, what’s wrong? You are usually the first to pounce on Kazuma. What happened to the most violent delinquent in Axel?”

“Yeah, Megumin who looks as if she had the most potential of taking the top class job ‘berserker’ out of everyone else, there’s no way she would be so obedient. Hey Kazuma, what exactly happened in the Home of the Crimson Magic?”

“The two of you are too rude! I am an Arch wizard, known for calmness and maturity!... So Kazuma, what’s with you all of a sudden? If you want a sister, instead of discussing with us, you should ask your parents right?”

“I already told my parents plenty of times that I want a younger sister. And it must be a sister that is not related to me by blood, so they need to hurry up and divorce, and remarry with someone that has a daughter. That was the first time my parents beat me up.”

“They must be wonderful parents to not have chased their son who said something like that out.”

“My parents don’t matter! I can’t even go back to my country anyway, so that’s just useless talk. The important thing is —!”

Using an exaggerated movement, I turned my head to face the three of them who was unwilling to stick to the topic.

“The healing type big sister Wiz, the energetic girl Chris, the cold type big sister Sena, and the unlucky type Yunyun! There’s even the orthodox main heroine Eris-sama— I have met all types of beauties!”

“Kazuma-san Kazuma-san, what about me? What type of beauty am I?”

“You are a complementary type or a pet type. Hey hey, this is the crucial part, leave everything to later!”

I shook off Aqua who pounced onto me and clenched my fist: “... I realized something important. It is not complete yet. In the country I was born in, Japan, I sort of have a childhood friend too... So, you understand what else is missing?”

Megumin sighed deeply, as if she understood what I am saying.

“... You are really hopeless. So what you are saying is, you want me to fill the role of your sister?”

“What are you talking about? Megumin, you are the loli type.”

“Eh!?”

Besides Megumin who was surprised for unknown reason, Darkness raised her hand shyly.

“Erm, what type of beauty am I...”

“You are the one in charge of the erotic stuff.”

“Erotic!?”

Ignoring Darkness and Megumin who seemed to be shocked by something, I state my conclusion.

“You see, when we went to the Home of the Crimson Magic, didn’t Megumin have a little sister? I felt back then that I should have a little sister too... You all know what I am saying?”

“Not at all.”

The one who answered was Aqua who listened obediently to the end.

— There was a proper reason why I am saying all this right now.

That was...

“The Princess... seemed to be younger than me, maybe she is a younger sister type...”

That’s right. I have high hopes for the first Princess who sent that letter.

I heard the Princess was just twelve.

Her age was outside my strike zone.

But at the least, I hope to build a good relationship with that kid and let her call me Onii-sama.

I wasn’t sure if they knew what I was thinking after returning from the Home of the Crimson Magic.

“... Hey Kazuma. It’s not too late to reject the invitation! Okay? The other party is one of the heads of the kingdom! It might be a meal together, but it won’t go as you expected. It will definitely be boring! Alright? Everyone, just ignore this invitation!”

Darkness who was uncharacteristically determined would try to convince me periodically.

Darkness had been pulling out all the stops to stop me from seeing the Princess, but I felt her intensity increase after hearing what I said.

I remain seated steadily on the carpet and said: "... You must be thinking that we will do something rude in the presence of the Princess right?"

Darkness shook violently for an instance when she heard me say that.

Her eyes wavered and before long her head slightly lowered: *It, it's not something like that... Right?*

Who is this?

"Hey, look into my eyes, don't use honorifics you are not used to and say it again. You are worried that we will make some mistakes that would tarnish the reputation of the Dustiness family, right?"

"Is that right!? You are too much, Darkness! We know when to behave ourselves!"

"Unbelievable! Darkness, you think we will do anything that will be detrimental to you? We are comrades! Please trust us a bit more!"

When they heard what I said, Aqua and Megumin chipped in.

"Ug... Ughhh... To be honest, I know you all too well, that's why I am worried..."

Darkness said on the verge of tears.

I said to Darkness who had an uneasy expression.

"I know our difference in status and am aware of the basic etiquettes. I am just excited to see a lady from high society, that's all."

"Hey hey, I am also a lady from high society!"

I found Darkness who was at a lost refreshing.

"That's right, I need to buy a tuxedo. You all don't have dresses right? Let's go and tailor one."

"Great idea! I want to wear something other than a Hagoromo too! But can they finish in time?"

"I want a black gown of course. Something that has an air of maturity."

Aqua and Megumin showed no signs of rejecting the invitation.

Seeing us like this, Darkness finally burst out in tears.

"You, you guys... She is the Princess of a kingdom you know? You might lose your head if you say anything wrong! Kazuma, warn them too..."

"A tuxedo is too common after all. Alright, to leave a good impression on the Princess, I will make a set of Kimono and Hakama..."

"Please, I will do anything! I will do anything I can, so don't wear something weird to the event!"

Darkness pleaded with me.

Part 2

“Well then, the week before the Princess and her entourage arrive— since you went that far, I will leave all the household chores to you.”

The next day after Darkness pleaded with me in tears.

“... I, I understand. I am serious about what I said in the Home of the Crimson Magic. It seems that I have underestimated you.”

Right now, Darkness was wearing a maid costume that I deliberately chose one size too small.

Darkness with her special short dress was sexy enough to match her title of the one in charge of the erotic stuff.

Darkness had a resigned expression as she stood before me.

Seeing Darkness drum up the courage to dress like that, I started getting cocky.

“At a time like this, you should say ‘As you wish, master.’”

“...Erm ... Ugh!! As, as you wish, master! I am a dirty sow...!!”



“I didn’t tell you to go that far.”

I stopped Darkness who was quivering with a flushed face.

— In exchange for not wearing a Kimono and not doing anything rude in front of the Princess, I fulfilled one of the wishes I always had.

That’s right. It was to make her wear a maid costume with short skirt while working hard at her chores.

If I get too cocky, it would be terrifying in the future. Hence, I didn’t go all out, but it should be fine to indulge once in awhile.

“So, what should I do? To be honest, I have never done household chores before, so I don’t know where to start. Anyway, should I spill tea onto your pants right between the legs, and then rush over in a panic to wipe it?”

“Don’t brew tea anymore in the future.”

Just what kind of profession did she think a maid was?

“Eh, just clean up the place for now. Don’t wash the plates and cutlery, you will probably break them. I’ve had enough of losing money in such cliché scenes.”

“... Eh... As you wish...”

Darkness who seemed depressed for some reason dragged her feet as she left the living room.

Aqua and Megumin were off to Wiz’s shop.

Hence, it was just me and Darkness in the mansion right now.

Now that I think about it, Darkness had always been causing trouble for me.

So let me order her around today as I please.

... At this moment.

“Hyaahhh!”

The scream accompanied the sound of pottery breaking.

Then Darkness charged over with the shattered pieces of something in her arms.

“I am very sorry master! I broke master’s important vase! No matter what kind of punishment it is, I...!”

“I don’t have any vase and won’t treat some shoddy vase like a treasure, but if you break something important to me, I will punish you by making you wear that maid costume to the adventurers guild.”

“!?”

— Darkness cleaned the windows with no regards to the dust falling on her.

As for me, I was checking Darkness’ work.

If you ask why I was doing that, the answer was that I had nothing to do.

I slid my finger across the windows and looked at my fingertips.

However, it didn't have any dust I was hoping for on it, she cleaned everything very well.

"... Ugh, you have always been of scant use, but you just have to pick this moment to clean it so thoroughly...! I wanted to pick a bone with you and order the crusader Lalatina to parade around the adventurers guild in maid attire as punishment."

"Fufu, I won't be punished so easily. You are still the guy who can guess what I hate the most... And please, stop calling me Lalatina."

In terms of cleaning, I had no choice but to give the blushing Darkness a passing grade.

— However, even after that.

"... Ugh, I thought you will mixed up the salt and sugar...!"

"If I read the labels carefully, I won't make such a mistake. And as an adventurer, I can still do simple tasks like cooking meat."

I muttered unconsciously while eating the lunch prepared by Darkness.

It was rice with salad and grilled meat, but from her choice of a simple meal that was hard to mess up, she really didn't want to be punished.

Darkness had a smug face of victory.

"Hmmp, I used high quality meat. How is the taste?"

"Average."

"!?"

— Cleaning the toilet.

That was normally Aqua's responsibility.

"... Erm, is there really a need to clean the toilet?"

"... Pro-probably not."

It was probably the cleansing effect of the goddess of water.

She always did it so lacklusterly, but the toilets under Aqua's care were the most sparkling places in the entire house.

No choice but to move on to the next phase.

"—Really!? Is this really the most important job of a maid!? You are really not bullying me because I am unworldly!? At least my father didn't ask the maids employed in my house to do this!?"

"It's true! In my country, maids who don't do this are not fit to be maids!"

I kept entering and exiting the door into the mansion, and made Darkness greet me with a smile and say 'Welcome home master.'

“Hey, your smile is too stiff! Why do you look so unfriendly!? How scary! Give a cuter smile and say ‘welcome home’!”

“Wel-welcome home master!”

“Wrong! Your hands should be like this! Legs like that! lean forward to emphasis your body parts! Isn’t your only strong point your erotic body!? Quick, again!”

“Welcome home master! I might like to be teased, but if you go too far, my other strong point, my grip strength will...!”

“Aaahhhhh, it’s breaking, my head is going to explode! Something is coming out! I’m sorry!!”

I screamed an apology after my temple were crushed by her iron claw.

Part 3

“Seriously. If the punishment or bullying was more exciting for me, I wouldn’t mind doing it to you.”

“You might say that now, but you will shriek away just before crossing the last line.”

After playing with Darkness for a while, we went for a stroll outside.

“However, you’re not too opposed against the maid costume. You should try wearing more frilly clothes sometimes.”

Because Darkness plead with me in tears not to make her wear maid costumes onto the streets, I allowed her to wear her casual clothes today.

“... I know very well whether cute clothes suits me. That’s why, I want to wear casual clothes when doing house chores tomorrow...”

“I won’t give in on that.”

Darkness seemed troubled but was lowering her head happily. Shortly after, we arrived at the shop we were going to.

“Yo, sorry for the intrusion.”

“Ah, welcome, Kazuma-san! We are just bringing in the fire starting item invented by Kazuma-san!”

We came to Wiz’s shop.

Today, they would be selling all sorts of convenient merchandize from Japan.

Megumin who was watching the developed merchandize and Aqua who was behaving herself after receiving tea snacks were also inside the shop.

That guy who had the most impactful presence wasn’t here.

Megumin who noticed that I was here took a lighter and shouted at me: “Kazuma, Kazuma, quick, show me the power of this magic item!”

“This is not a magic item, I told you this is a convenient tool from my country! Here, watch carefully.”

I took the lighter from Megumin and used it.

“Oh!?” x3

When they saw the fire I lit, Megumin, Darkness and Wiz shouted in surprise.

“This, this is very convenient! Really, it is just like tinder magic! Kazuma-san, this will definitely sell!”

Wiz was waving her hands around excitedly.

“The structure is simple, but it is unexpectedly useful. It’s hard to believe this is not a magic item. And if you use it sparingly, it will last a long time.”

Megumin was impressed as she observed the lighter from all sorts of angles. From her comment, she seemed really interested in this.

“I want one too. Flintstones don’t work well in wet places, and starting a fire wastes a lot of time too. Bringing flammable materials to start a fire is troublesome, and keeping it dry is also a pain. This will solve all the problems I mentioned. Wiz, Kazuma, can you sell me one? How much is it?”

Darkness said as she dug through her purse for money.

Wiz smiled when she heard that.

“No need. After all, this is something Kazuma-san invented, we merely produced it. Everyone helped with the development of the merchandize too. Please pick something you like.”

When Aqua saw Darkness and Megumin picking up a lighter happily after they heard Wiz’s words, Aqua who was eating the snacks greedily sneered.

“Really, bunch of hillbillies. Being happy over just a lighter. It is really easy to make something like this. That’s why, people who are behind the times...”

Aqua mocked Wiz and the others aloofly as she reached for a lighter...

I slapped away her hand.

“... What’s with you, Kazuma? Let me pick one too.”

“No, pay for it first.”

After I added “it’s common sense to pay when you buy things’, Aqua got in my face.

“Ahh? Why, why do you only treat me meanly!? Wiz already said she is giving it to us!? Why is it fine for Darkness and Megumin but not me, don’t just exclude me!”

“I am fine with it if you didn’t mock the three of them. Anyway, you were completely not involved in this right? Wiz is the shopkeeper, Megumin shared with me her knowledge of how the Crimson Magic Clan crafts magic items, Darkness introduced me to a lot of merchant wholesalers. While all this was happening, didn’t you just stay in the mansion eating and sleeping and eating again? If you want a share, then go outside and attract some customers in.”

When Aqua heard what I said, she said these words with tears in her eyes and charged out of the shop: “Waahhhhh! Kazuma you illogical fellow! And I was thinking about keeping the fact that you sniff our laundry a secret!”

“Hey wait! I-I didn’t do that! Don’t talk such nonsense, hey! ... Really! Megumin, Darkness, don’t look at me like that... Wait, why is Wiz doing that too!? No, I’m being framed!”

While I was trying my best to dispel this misunderstanding, Aqua who had dashed out of the shop poked her head back in.

“... If I attract lots of customers, can you give me one?”

“Yes I will, resolve this misunderstanding before you go!”

Part 4

The entrance to the magic item shop was extremely crowded.

According to Wiz, this was the first time so many people gathered on this street.

It seemed that Vanir who had yet to make his appearance spread some news.

Maybe it affected this commotion too.

I spotted some people holding flyers within the crowd.

“... But, this is an amazing amount of people.”

“... True.”

I answered casually after hearing Darkness’ mumbling.

“... It would be great if all of them are customers here to buy the merchandize...”

“..... True.”

I replied Megumin weakly.

I watched the center of the crowd.

Wiz had a troubled face and said timidly: “... E-even customers who were planning to visit us had been drawn over to her...”

“Ah, right! Ahhhh, what the hell is that girl doing ahhhhh!”

Right before us, Aqua was performing her tricks and was showered by cheers and applause.

Even the customers who came because of the flyers forgot their objectives and was watching her.

I did ask her to attract customers, but I didn’t ask her to go that far.

Aqua had completely forgotten her original objectives and was showcasing her tricks wholeheartedly.

“Next, from this piece of normal handkerchief! Suddenly, pigeons will fly out!”

Aqua said as she took out a handkerchief.

This was a typical magic trick.

Hiding a pigeon in your clothes, then making it look like the pigeon flew out from the handkerchief.
Aqua flicked the handkerchief, and from there...

“Uuooooohh!?” x4

A flock of pigeons numbering over a hundred flew out, shocking the audience.

“That’s too many! What, how did she do it!? This is physically impossible!”

I started questioning my eyes and asked Wiz who was beside me.

“Who, who knows... I didn’t feel any mana, so it shouldn’t be summoning magic, it is not possible to hide the pigeons somewhere... Eh, so how did she...?”

Even Wiz, the expert in magic placed her hand besides her mouth and started pondering.

“Ah, please don’t throw money. I am not a busker, so no money please.”

Aqua solemnly rejected the tips thrown forth by the crowd.

She had a principle she insisted on upholding for her tricks.

By the way, she could make a living just by performing on the streets.

I was rendered speechless, and before I knew it, I had mixed into the crowd because Aqua’s wonderful performance.

“What, what is with this terrible sight...”

Vanir who came back suddenly stared at the crowd.

Aqua who was standing in the middle of the crowd took out a large quantity of potions that probably came from Wiz’s shop.

“Next, I will count to three, and all these potions will disappear without a trace! Even I won’t know where it would go! Let’s start counting!”

“Count thy head thee imbecile!! What in the heavens art thee doing!? Art thee not satisfied with sprinkling holy water on the handles of our shop? Art thee finally disrupting moi business openly!?”

That girl, so that was what she was doing when she was wandering outside.

“Don’t get in my way you odd masked man! This is a public road, do you have any problem with me performing here!?”

“Of course, you twat! I bet the future of this shop on this day that commemorate the sale of our new products! I don’t have time for you to obstruct my business!”

Wiz ignored the two of them who were yelling without regards for the customers, and shouted: “Dear customers, we have plenty of convenient items in stock! Please have a look!”

This was the first time I saw Wiz acting like a shop owner!

— Although all sorts of things happened.

“Come come, welcome! Customers who make purchases amounting to ten thousand Eris will receive a Vanir doll that laughs at night as a gift! Customers who make purchases five hundred thousand Eris and above, be amazed—! Thou shalt receive a Vanir mask that is similar in design to mine as a complementary gift! ... Ara, young boy, moi mask is not for sale. Sorry, take this shiny card with you ... This way, welcome!”

The suspicious shop attendant shouting vigorously was unexpectedly popular with the kids.

“Thank you for your patronage, thank you for your patronage! Ah, two lighters and a Vanir mask right!? Thank you for your patronage!”

The Japanese convenient product was selling like hot cakes.

The merchandize were really flying off the shelf. If I knew it could sell so well, I should have started doing business earlier.

“Let me go Darkness! He is implying I am stealing his customers, this is so vexing! Let me perform!”

“Calm down Aqua, you forgot your objective! Here, be a good girl and come here!”

Darkness restrained Aqua who wanted to obstruct the business while Wiz and Vanir busied themselves with entertaining the customers.

When the number of customers finally dropped, the excited Vanir came to our side.

“Fuhahahaha! Moi can’t stop laughing at this situation! Look, it is still ways to go before the shop closes, but the merchandize are almost sold out. Allow moi to thank thee once again, brat who enjoyed a great atmosphere with your companion during the trip, but feels uneasy because there isn’t any development at all in the end!”

“Hey, are you talking about me!? Is it really me!? D-don’t joke with me, I-I-I am not uneasy at all! W-what, Megumin, don’t keep glancing my way!”

“I-I am not glancing, not at all! Don’t waver Kazuma, how can you be fooled by the devil’s lies!”

The thing I was most concerned about after returning from the Home of the Crimson Magic was retorted so easily!

“It’s fine if thee two get married and make babies, but it’s annoying to see the two of thee stealing glances at each other. So just go to an inn or somewhere dark and get it down— Hmm, instead of that.”

This guy was really... Should I get Aqua to finish him off?

“If this went on, the three hundred million Eris thou deserved would be ready by the end of the month. This isn’t much, but consider this a compensation from moi for making thee wait for so long.”

Vanir said as he passed to me a black mask that was slightly different in design from the one he was wearing.

“This is one of the top seller in our shop, mass produced Vanir mask that is really popular in the society. If you wear it in a moonlit night, your mana will increase, metabolism enhance and your skin will have a silky luster because of the mysterious power of the devil. This is a rare black mask amount these products, so you can flaunt it to the kids.”

I-I don’t want it...

Would I be cursed if I wore this...?

Part 5

From that day forth, Wiz’s shop was uncharacteristically crowded.

Finally, today—

“And so, all of you understand right?”

That’s right. Today was the day we would be eating together with the Princess.

When Darkness wasn’t in the living room, I told Aqua and Megumin that we can’t dishonor Darkness’ name.

“Of course. This is a rare chance. I won’t embarrass Darkness, so let me use the party trick I have been holding back all this while to hype up the crowd! ... Kazuma, I want to take a tiger out from a hat, but there isn’t one. In that case, using a rookie killer as a replacement will do, can you catch one for me?”

“I will use the extravagant appearance in the style of the Crimson Magic to give the Princess a pleasant surprise. Kazuma, I will need something that will produce lots of smoke and fire powder. Where should I buy these?”

... Darkness’ worry was warranted.

— The Dustiness mansion.

The largest mansion in Axel town was being guarded tightly.

The small number of househelp had increased in number, probably to give the appearance of grandiose.

It was to be expected.

The first Princess of this country, Iris, had already moved into this mansion yesterday.

At the entrance of the Dustiness mansion.

Wearing a pure white gown with her long blonde hair braided beautifully and hanging over her right shoulder, Darkness appeared before us.

It was a white and pure gown, but it looked lewd because of the one wearing it.

“Satou Kazuma-sama and ladies. We are honoured by your visit. Today, I, Dustiness fon Lalatina will be your hostess. Please treat this as your own home and enjoy yourself.”

Darkness who looked totally the part of an aristocratic lady led the househelp behind her and bowed to us after her formal greeting.

After the ceremonious welcome, we weren’t sure how we should react.

“T-tank you...”

I bit my tongue right off the bat.

When she saw my mistake, Darkness who was smiling gently lowered her head suddenly with a blushed face.

Her shoulders were quivering, she seemed to be holding back her laughter.

This, this jerk...!

Damn, I shouldn’t do something I wasn’t used to.

“Hey Darkness, stop laughing and lead the way. These clothes are uncomfortably tight.”

I was wearing a rental black suit from the tailor shop.

It was something that should be worn with a bow tie, but Aqua and Megumin laughed loudly at me when I tried it on, so I decided to never wear it ever again.

Aqua and Megumin didn't had enough time to make dresses, so they borrowed from Darkness.

"Everyone, this way please."

Darkness' shoulders continued to quiver as she led us into the mansion.

"— Please wait here for a moment. The young lady is choosing the dresses."

The househelp brought us to a reception room.

We settled down on a couch over there. The househelp brewed tea for us and left the room so we could enjoy it in peace.

Shortly after, Darkness came in with some other househelp holding dresses. They bowed to us and stood near the door—

Darkness then gestured for Aqua and Megumin to come to her.

Aqua and Megumin followed behind Darkness and entered the room next door, and then...

"Darkness, the waist is really loose. Is there one that is tighter?"

"That, that piece has the slimmest waist... It can't be helped, crusaders needs muscles...! What's the matter, Megumin?"

"... How should I put this... It slipped right off. The waist and chest are too loose. Is there anything smaller..."

I heard the three of them talking next door.

"Well, I do have others... but that one was from when I was a child... It hurts it hurts it hurts! Megumin, don't pull my braids!"

They then spoke to the househelp, who were probably tailoring the dress on the spot...

Finally, Darkness brought the two tired girls out of the room.

"...phew"

Hearing me gasp, Megumin turned shy and lowered her head slightly.

As her shoulders were bare, her porcelain white skin was exposed. Thanks to the black dress that contrasted with her skin, she looked different from her usual Loli appearance and was very elegant.

Aqua who was wearing a white dress followed right behind.

"Kazuma, look, look. How is it? This is what it means by 'clothes makes the man'."

This wasn't really a compliment, but it fits Aqua right now.

It wasn't her usual blue attire and Haguromo, but a pure white dress, she was so beautiful that it wouldn't be a surprise if anyone worships her if she kept her mouth shut.

“Really, Kazuma, with so many beauties before you, you won’t lose anything by complimenting and worshipping us a little right?”

Really, if she would only shut her mouth.

“Yeah, it's very pretty. But the important thing was still the Princess. She had been here since yesterday huh?”

Hearing me asking so expectantly, Darkness had an expression of unease from the bottom of her heart.

“... I am serious, don’t do anything rude alright? After all, you tend to blurt out incredible things sometimes. As an adventurer who fights constantly as a career, you would be given more leeway. However, you might still lose your head if you say the wrong things.”

My expectations grew after listening to what Darkness said.

Her royal highness.

That’s right, the royal Princess.

Beautiful and demure, a Princess that loves butterflies and birds.

No, since she likes stories of adventures, she might be unexpectedly lively.

Our team which seemed to fail at everything had finally risen to the point that royalty would come to visit us.

It couldn’t be helped if I get a little carried away.

“Hey, let me say this first. I really don’t want to leave this mansion. Although I’ve lived here for so long and really like it here... if the Princess asked me to be on her escort team or something, I will consider moving out. So you all should prepare yourselves mentally.”

“How did things develop so far? Didn’t I tell you it is just dining together normally?”

With Darkness leading the way, we walked towards the place to meet the Princess.

And finally, we reached a huge room used for the dining event.

Darkness turned to us once again.

“Okay, listen well. She is a Princess of a nation... Kazuma, you might have many flaws, but you still have common sense, so I won’t need to worry about you too much. And I even dressed up like a maid and served you, so don’t think you can get away if you screw this up. Aqua, don’t go overboard with your performing, especially those dangerous ones, they are banned. And Megumin... I will search you right now!”

“Eh!? Wait, wait a minute Darkness, why just me!? What is there to search, we even changed in the same room...! Ahh, wait, Kazuma is looking! See, Kazuma is using the chance to stare at me!”

I looked at the two of them wrestling before me and asked Aqua: “What trickery are you going to show?”

“What do you mean by trickery, how rude. It’s a rare chance to meet with royalty, but it’s boring just for the Princess to see this. I planned to make a painting on the spot... specifically, a sand painting. I would then gift it to her.”

“Huh. You really know all sorts of things...”

As we were conversing...

“Hah, see! What is this Megumin!? A smoke bomb to disperse monsters, and a potion that will explode once it is opened! What are you planning to do with these!? That’s why your chest is so suspiciously big!”

“You are pretty good, Darkness, but I still have a second and third way of making a grandiose introduction...!”

Seeing the two of them continue to wrestle, the househelp who had been with us since they chose the dresses sighed deeply.

“... Will we be implicated too...?”

I felt the same way.

Part 6

“... Well then, we are going now. Listen, I will handle Her Highness Iris, you all just need to eat and nod. I will explain everything to her.”

Darkness said as she led the way and opened the door.

It was vast in there, a high class dining hall that wasn’t overly extravagant.

The hall was illuminated by candles and was well lit.

Several servants surrounded the table from a far distance away, waiting quietly.

The room was covered in red carpet

A large table with all sorts of fancy dishes sit in the middle of the carpet laden room. At the head of the table was a girl who was dressed in white just like Aqua and Darkness.

On either side of the girl stood two young women.

One wore a black dress and was unarmed, and looked a little plain.

Judging from the rings with sharp edges shining on her hand, she was probably a mage.

The other woman wasn’t wearing a dress, but a white suit. A short haired beauty with a sword on her waist.

It was probably inappropriate for the young Princess to have male knights as guards, that’s why her attendants were women.

Darkness led us slowly towards the three of them.

“Sorry for the wait, Princess Iris. These are my friends, and my adventuring comrades, Satou Kazuma and his team. This way, my friends. This is the first Princess of the kingdom, Her Highness Iris. Please introduce yourself with the adequate etiquette.”

She said while gesturing to the young girl in the middle.

She was just what I expected a young Princess to be.

Semi-long golden locks and clear blue eyes.



Giving off a sense of regal quality, an orthodox beauty with a dreamy air about her was right there.

How precious, this was a rare exception where the fantasy world did not betray my expectation.

Elves wearing fake ears, beardless dwarves, cat eared orcs, and a disappointing lich.

After seeing all sorts of weirdoes, I was wary about a weird Princess appearing.

While I was feeling moved and stopped thinking, Aqua gently lifted the corners of her skirt and did a perfect curtsy.

When we saw her like that, not just me, even Darkness tensed up—

“I am an archpriest, Aqua. Please to meet you... Alright, allow me to present a performance as a greeting...”

Aqua was about to show some tricks when Darkness grabbed her hand.

“Ex-excuse for a moment, Princess Iris. I have something to tell my companion...”

Aqua pulled on Darkness’ braids in protest while she was being restrained.

Using the chance while Darkness was distracted by Aqua, Megumin reached into her dress.

She took out a black mantle quickly.

She seemed to have tied it to her thigh to hide it, and sneaked it through Darkness’ body search.

After Megumin opened the mantle with a flick and wore it on her shoulders, and was about to introduce herself grandly, her hand was grabbed by Darkness.

With one hand grabbing Aqua and the other holding Megumin, Darkness tried to smile as Aqua stroked her braids happily, but she looked as if she would burst into tears any moment.

Aqua seemed to be enamoured by how the braids felt in her hand, and didn’t plan to stop.

... At this moment, the Princess looked at me as she whispered to the female attendant in a white suit.

She was probably shy.

“Lowly plebeian, do not leer at royalty with such lewd eyes. Normally, it would be impossible for you to meet and dine together with royalty because of the difference in status. Lower your head, don’t meet my eyes. Hurry up with your greetings and tell me about your adventures... The Princess said.”

When I heard the white suit woman said that, I froze.

After a moment, I understood.

During the times of samurais in Japan, because of the status difference between the lord and his vassals, they wouldn’t dine in the same table and would eat at different times.

Getting the white suit woman to speak in her place, was probably to avoid conversing with people of low status.

I felt at ease with aristocrats because of Darkness and her father, but this was the norm for nobles and royalties.

I see, I got it... I simply said: "Change."

"Your Highness Iris, please wait for a moment! My comrades are tense because of their excitement, allow me to speak with them for a moment...!"

I was dragged by Darkness to a corner of the hall by her hand.

"You, you idiot! What the hell is 'change'!? Why do you think I suffered through all that humiliation and served you!? This is not what we agreed on!"

Facing Darkness who wanted to strangle me, I protested by pulling on her braids.

"'What the hell' and 'not what we agreed on' should be my lines! All those talks about the Princess filled me with expectations, but what is all this!? The development I was looking forward to was... '*I yearn for the world outside! Brave adventurer-sama, please allow me to hear your tales of adventures!*' What kind of dining together is this, are they looking down on me!?"

"Hey, shut up now...! Ughh, why is everyone pulling on my hair today...! Ermm... no-not in a place like this, this type of things should be done when the two of us are alone...!"

I pointed in the Princess' direction and said to Darkness who was spilling nonsense: "By the way, something seemed to be happening, is it fine to leave her alone?"

In the directions I was pointing at, Aqua was painting on a piece of paper with glue, and then sprinkled sand on top of it.

Completed in no time was an incredibly high quality sand painting.

It was a work that might be mistaken for a black and white photo from far...

"To commemorate the day we meet the Princess, I present you with this. It even replicated the disgraceful bit of sauce at the corner of the lips perfectly..."

When the Princess heard Aqua's unnecessary words, she wiped the corner of her mouth frantically.

"Your Highness Iris, I will chase this insolent fool out, please wait a moment!!"

Darkness screamed as she lift the edge of her dress slightly off the ground and charged.

When the Princess heard her scream, she whispered to the white suit woman besides her.

"Because the Princess saw the rare sight of the calm and quiet Lalatina acting so frantically, she won't pursue the matter. It is normal for adventurers to be a little more crude. Instead of that, hurry up and tell your stories of adventure, the Princess said."

As the white suit woman repeated the Princess' word, Her Highness looked at Aqua doing her best to protect the sand painting in her arms from Darkness and smiled happily.

Darkness bowed deeply towards the Princess—

"My deep apologies Princess Iris! How should I put this, the three of them are also the most problematic bunch amongst the adventurers!"

While Darkness was doing her best to explain, Aqua presented the sand painting to Her Highness and said "For you".

When the Princess saw the sand painting she had a shocked expression and whispered to the white suit woman.

“To draw such a perfect sand painting in so little time...! Amazing, simply amazing! A reward for you! The Princess said.”

The white suit woman said as she took out something from her pocket and offered it to Aqua.

It was a small gem.

Even to my untrained eyes, I could tell that gem was really valuable.

Aqua took it and held it between her thumb and index finger, appraising it happily in the light.

Darkness who was lowering her head embarrassingly sat to the right of the Princess.

Megumin and Aqua sat to the side of Darkness.

The Princess gestured for me to sit to her left.

Her Highness stared at me who was sitting down as requested as she whispered to the white suit woman.

“Are you the one the brave magic sword user Mitsurugi mentioned? Let me hear your story, Her Highness said... I want to hear to, about how you defeated that Mitsurugi.”

Was Mitsurugi famous in the kingdom?

And what exactly did that guy said about me?

I basked in the gaze full of expectation from the white suit woman and the Princess, and stated recounting my past memories...

Part 7

“I had a stroke of inspiration and set a trap. I undid the seal in order to lock Sylvia inside! And so, I managed to buy time for the Crimson Magic Clan to regroup!”

“Amazing! I have heard of all sorts of adventuring stories yet, but you are the first person I knew that fought like this! Also, this is the first time I heard such a touching story full of surprises! The stories of the other adventurers simply detailed how they elegantly wiped out the monsters, or how he defeated the dragon on the mountain with just a sword... The stories told to me so far were amazing, but they were all how the heroes defeated the monsters one sidedly...! That’s what Her Highness said.”

The Princess listened to my adventure tales with sparkling eyes, just like a kid.

A person with high standings was listening to my words expectantly.

In such a situation, it couldn’t be helped if I acted a little arrogantly.

“... Really, that guy is spouting nonsense.”

Aqua’s furtive voice came from the table diagonal to my side.

I wasn’t bothered by the audience and continued: “Your Highness, that is because the other adventurers subjugated opponents they could take on. I am not saying that is bad, but they are obviously different from me who fought with foes that are stronger than me as I strived to better myself every day.”

“How exemplary! Since you are constantly working to improve yourself, how do you spend your time...? The Princess is curious... As am I, how does a person like you spend your days...?”

I said to the Princess and the white suit woman who were impressed: “Right... I usually rest at home during the day, and venture out when night falls. I would then patrol the town quietly and help maintain law and order.”

I didn't touch the extravagant food much as I drank my beverage while I explained.

From the other side of the table, the soft mumbling of Megumin could be heard.

“Aqua, this guy idles the entire day and says his depraved life of wandering around as patrols.”

“Shh, just watch. This guy will get too cocky and dig his own grave, okay?”

I heard what Aqua said, but I wasn't an idiot either.

I only said these things after observing the expression and reaction of the Princess.

When I looked at Darkness, she was lowering her head shyly for some reason as Megumin stroked her braids.

Megumin like the touch of Darkness' braids too.

Darkness noticed that they would behave when they were playing with her hair, so she let Megumin do as she please.

The Princess sighed after hearing my words and whispered into the ears of the white suit woman.

“What a strange adventurer. You are completely different from all the adventurers I have met so far. What did you do before you became an adventurer? Says the Princess.”

My previous job huh...

I reminisced about my life in Japan and said: “Before I came to this country, my job was to guard the home of my family. I trained my skills every day, protecting my home from crisis and disasters. A miserable job that no one would understand nor appreciate...”

When they heard what I said, “Hmm, so it is something like the castle guard in the capital? ...They are the same, they don't receive much credit. But the guards being idle was proof that the capital was peaceful... So you too were protecting your hometown from harm anonymously.”

I nodded deeply after hearing what the white suit woman said.

“I had to deal with people forcing me to sign contracts, telling me that ‘it will just be for three months’. I fended off people eyeing my wealth too, lots of things happened.”

That's right, newspaper vendors and television fees collectors.

The surprised white suit woman whispered to the Princess: “Forcing him to sign a contract... He must have defeated a devil... Wealth... Those were probably bandits...”

Aqua who was listening all this while looked at me as if she had something to say.

Even though I turned my face to avoid her gaze, she still looked at me persistently.

Please, I wasn't lying. Don't look at me like that.

Part 8

Everyone was enjoying their meal and the chattering stopped momentarily.

The white suit woman suddenly said to me who was getting arrogant.

“To think that you actually won against the hero with the magic sword, Mitsurugi... Pardon my impudence, could I take a look at your adventurers card? I wish to use Kazuma-san's skills as reference for myself...”

She said something incredible.

My problematic adventurers card couldn't be shown to others.

I will be in hot soup if they questioned me where I learned the skills of a lich from.

Megumin noticed my anxiety—

“Erm, for us adventurers, revealing our information will be too sensitive— even for the attendants of a Princess... Ahh, instead of that, Aqua, the party is simmering down, it's about time for you to show your secret party tricks...!”

She tried to divert the topic to cover for me.

And Aqua would...!

“...? I drew something great today, so that is enough. Megumin, you really want to watch my performance huh? Can't be helped then, I will show it to you when I get in the mood tomorrow. Hey, more wine, more wine.”

Aqua was splendidly ignorant of the mood today too, and was even rushing the servers for more wine.

The white suit woman tilted her head suspiciously.

“We are not adventurers like you, but the nobility of the kingdom. We won't reveal Kazuma-dono's details carelessly. Referencing Kazuma-dono's skills will improve the combat potential of the kingdom's army, which will ultimately help in defeating the demon king. Could you please aid us in strengthening the fighting prowess of the kingdom? Or is there some reason why you won't let me look at it?”

It was true that there was a reason I couldn't let others see this.

At this moment.

“That man has the weakest job, adventurer. He probably has a complex about it and doesn't want others to know. Could you let it go on my account?”

Darkness smiled at the white suit woman with a smile.

“Yes, that's right. I didn't mention this earlier, but I actually have the weakest job. Ara, this is embarrassing, I got found out.”

Seeing me scratch my head, the white suit woman's attitude changed with disappointment.

“So you have the weakest job... Are you really as good as you said? You mentioned about winning against Mitsurugi in a fight, but is that true? If it is so, pray tell us how you won against him.”

She was polite, but the content showed her obvious doubts.

I won against Mitsurugi by stealing his sword and sneak attacks, I couldn't say such an inglorious way of winning out loud.

... The Princess then tugged at the shirt of the white suit woman.

And whispered into the ear of the white suit woman while glancing at me...

The mouth of the white suit woman moved as if she was troubled by what she heard.

"... Erm... It is hard to believe the handsome Mitsurugi would lose to someone with the weakest job. Are you lying to me, a royalty? Even the common people on the streets know about the sword master who wields a magic sword. It is unfathomable for him to lose to someone with the weakest job in the beginner town, since he is handsome... That's what Her Highness said... I think so too, since he is handsome."

"Hey, are the two of you asking for a beating?"

I wouldn't be considered good looking, and retorted the white suit woman who kept saying the word handsome.

That's right, I even forgot about the other party being royalty and said so with my casual tone.

The white suit woman became agitated when she heard that.

"Insolent fool! How dare you say that in the presence of royalty!"

She shouted as she drew the sword on her waist.

Oh no, shit!

"My humble apologies, my companion said something rude...! He is a man who doesn't even know basic manners, please forgive him on my sake...! It is a fact that this man achieved great merits, and it would be inadequate for Your Highness Iris who invited him to a meal to hand down punishment...!"

Darkness lowered her head in an apology in my stead.

The Princess whispered to the white suit woman when she heard this.

"... Her Highness Iris says she won't pursue the matter on the account of the Dustiness house who had contributed tremendously to the kingdom. However, her mood had been spoiled. The reward for the stories of adventures will be paid out as usual. That conman with the weakest job over there, be gone after taking the money."

Ahh, what stinging words!

But thanks to Darkness, I was saved.

However, they were speaking in a manner just asking to be retorted, how unreasonable for them to get angry after I did retort them.

As I was thinking about hurrying and leave...

"Hurt, hurts!? Hey Megumin, what are you...!"

Darkness suddenly screamed.

It seemed that Megumin was venting her anger and tugged on Darkness' braid which she was stroking softly all this while.

Leaving Darkness who noticed this aside, even my face was turning green.

In our team, Megumin was probably the one who cherishes her comrades the most.

When we were escaping from Sylvia in the Home of the Crimson Magic, when she heard implicated even if we flee, Megumin chose to face the boss of the demon king's army in battle.

She once said 'if you are hit, hitting back is the true answer', Megumin who had the shortest temper among us couldn't just ignore this situation...!

“.....”

Megumin stroked Darkness' braids a few more times.

Her wrath seemed to dissipate, and she released the braid and went back to her food.

I was worried that she might say something like “You wench, try saying that again’ or something like that, but she didn’t.

The Princess was as surprised as the white suit woman, and the baffled Darkness asked Megumin: “... Megumin, you are really well behaved today. I thought you would cause some kind of commotion...”

Megumin quietly sent food into her mouth, chewed it and then swallowed.

She then finally said in a soft voice: “I won’t be able to bear it if I am alone. But if I rampage here, Darkness will be troubled.”

Darkness looked at Megumin who was eating quietly.

After a moment of silence...

She stood up suddenly and said to the Princess with her head bowed: “My sincere apologies, Your Highness Iris... Please take that your words about this man being a conman. He might exaggerate a little, but he didn’t lie. He might have the weakest job, but he is a man who is more reliable than anyone else during a pinch. Princess Iris, can you correct your speech earlier and apologize to him?”

The white suit woman turned furious when she heard Darkness.

“What are you saying, Lady Dustiness, you want Her Highness Iris to beg a peasant for forgiveness...!?”

The Princess stood up and spoke clearly in her own voice.

Even I could hear it.

“... I won’t apologize. If those wasn’t lies, then let that man explain how he won against Mitsurugi-sama. If he couldn’t do that, that mean this man is a weakling who is all talk—!?”

The Princess’ words were interrupted midway.

Darkness slapped her in the face in silence.

“What are you doing, Lady Dustiness!”

The woman in the white suit turned agitated and stood before the Princess who was stunned after being slapped, and glared furiously at Darkness.

“Ahh! No, don’t...!”

The Princess said hastily.

Before her voice could reach, the woman in the white suit swung her sword down at Darkness...!

“!?”

With a dull thud, the sword cut deep into Darkness’ wrist.

Red blood sprayed onto the clothes of the Princess, Darkness and the woman in the white suit.

The white suit woman remained still.

Or rather, she couldn’t move.

She probably swung with the intention to slash off the wrist.

But that blow only tore through Darkness’ skin and a bit of her muscle.

Darkness didn’t even glance at the shocked expression of the white suit woman and turned to face the Princess silently.

The crusader who was the pride of our team was tough.

She was probably the toughest in this nation.

“Your Highness Iris, pardon my impudence. However, that shouldn’t be something you should say to someone who did their best and achieve numerous merits. He also has no obligation to explain how he defeated the magic sword user. Also, not explaining doesn’t mean he should be lectured.”

Darkness used her still bleeding hand to caress the cheek of the Princess that she slapped, speaking in a calm and soothing voice as if she was educating a child.

The Princess looked blankly at Darkness.

I stood up.

“... I understand. My comrade covered for me this much, so I shouldn’t keep it from you... I will show you how I defeated Mitsurugi. Let me say this first, it’s nothing glamorous alright?”

I said to the white suit woman who still had a stunned expression.

She composed herself when she said that, pulled her sword back and took a stance.

“Enough, that’s enough! Claire, I am fine!”

The Princess shouted miserably.

I couldn’t feel the intense pressure from the Princess right now.

What was with this sudden change?

Maybe her nature wasn't bad?

“... Since you are agreeable, I have no objections. Go all out Kazuma. You won't say that you will lose right?”

Darkness covered her wounds with her other hand as she provoked me with a smile. I reached a hand out at the woman in the white suit—

“Of course, think about all the opponents I faced! From magic sword users to the bosses of the demon king army, even the mobile fortress Destroyer! I have always been fighting with such people! Take this, I will start with 'steal'!”

I shouted at the white suit woman who was watching me cautiously!

I will steal her sword and...!

... I didn't settle it.

I apologized to her softly.

“My bad. This... I will return it to you...”

“...? Eh, ahh...! Hyaaa!?”

I timidly offered the white panties in my hand to the white suit Onee-san who let go of her sword and was grasping at her lower abdomen.

“You, why you! Why do you always drop the ball at the crucial moments!”

Part 9

“Erm... My apologies for letting things turn out this way...”

The white suit woman apologized to us.

The Princess besides her hid her face behind the white suit woman as if she was hiding.

Darkness said to the white suit woman with a smile.

“Please don't mind it. We are partially at fault too. As you can see, the wounds have healed without any traces, let's forget about the matter.”

The white suit woman blushed with embarrassment at the sight.

Be it the Princess or the white suit lady, they didn't seemed concerned about how I won against Mitsurugi.

“... But, to heal that wound without any scars instantly... What a powerful archpriest.”

The white suit woman said as she looked at Aqua who was lying face down on the table.

I was wondering why she was behaving herself, so she was actually drunk after drinking too much and was asleep all this while.

We woke her up just now by hitting her in order to treat Darkness' wound, but she slept again immediately after doing so.

She will only spoil the mood if she was awake, so it's better to let her sleep.

The white suit woman continued: "And Lady Dustiness' toughness. The lady with crimson eyes who seemed to be from the Crimson Magic Clan... With a team formed with such members, it is understandable that you all could defeat a boss of the demon king army... Eh, but Kazuma-dono..."

For some reason, the white suit woman was only looking at me with doubtful eyes.

She was probably bearing a grudge because her underwear was stolen.

At this moment, the fidgeting Princess turned to the other woman.

The woman had not spoken so far, or even moved at all. The Princess whispered into the ears of the mage once-san that I forgot she exist.

"Your Highness Iris. I think it would be better if you say these words personally. It is fine, I have been observing all this while, Kazuma-dono seemed to be the type that dotes on girls of your type, Princess Iris."

Ara, someone I have never met before was accusing me of being a lolicon.

The Princess came before me with her head held low.

"... I am sorry for calling you a liar... Will you tell me adventure stories in the future too?"

She lifted her head a little shyly.

"I would be glad to!"

"— Well then, we will be returning to the castle. Lady Dustiness and everyone. Sorry for troubling you."

The mage once-san said to us.

Unlike earlier, the Princess besides her had a lively smile befitting her age.

"We should be the one thanking you for accommodating our shoddy reception... Your Highness Iris, let's talk again the next time we meet at the castle. I will bring you all sorts of adventure tales with me when I visit."

Darkness said with a warm smile, and the Princess smiled back shyly.

These two looked just like an elder sister who takes good care of people and a younger sister who admires her older sister.

The mage Once-san looked at the two of them serenely and started chanting teleport magic.

... Great.

"Well then, the Kingdom will keep your grand accomplishments in our history books. We will present you with this to acknowledge your merits."

The white suit woman said as she passed a plaque and a bag of something... to Darkness instead of me.

... That's fine with me!

"I am flattered... Princess Iris, please take care of yourself...!"

Darkness held on to the items and smiled warmly, Megumin was waving goodbye at her side too.

“Your Highness, I will visit you some other day and share with you my tales of adventure.”

As I was saying that and wanted to wave at the Princess.

The mage Onee-san completed her chant and the Princess pulled my hand.

“What do you mean?”

The Princess had a confused expression.

“Teleport!”

With the voice of the mage Onee-san, me, the Princess and the others were engulfed by light and I closed my eyes.

When I opened them...

The Princess who was standing before a huge castle smiled at me innocently.

When the Princess grabbed my hand, I seemed to have been brought to the castle along with them.

“Princess Iris!?”

The white suit woman and the mage Onee-san yelled at the same time.

“Didn’t you promised that you will tell me more stories of your adventures?”

The Princess said with a smile.

As expected of the big boss of the nobles— Royalty really don’t give a shit about others.

Gifting this Quick Witted Girl with Reeducation!

Part 1

The surrounding was completely engulfed by darkness, and the hour was late when people should be sleeping.

Even though it was a time like this.

“Welcome back, Princess Iris!” x3

There were a large number of maid welcoming us as if they were waiting for Iris’s return.

This was the hall within the castle, located in the heart of the capital.

As I was thinking ‘how the hell did things turn out like this’, with my brain functioning slowly, I was rushed to follow behind the Princess.

I was led by the princess and the white suited woman to a luxurious room at the top of the castle.

The white suited woman said she needed to make some reports and went off somewhere; leaving just me, the princess, and the mage in the room.

People we met on the way did not question us, simply bowing before passing us by.

It might sound strange for me to be the one saying it, but was it fine to let a suspicious man like me wander in the royal castle?

What should I do, I really want to go back.

I was imagining excitedly a short while ago about what I should do if the Princess appointed me as her knight.

The sudden abduction left me in a daze, and the Princess whispered to the mage Onee-san in front of me.

The mage nodded and said to me full of smiles:

“Satou Kazuma-sama, welcome to the castle. You are a guest, so please make yourself comfortable. Just treat this place as your home and rest easy. This is now your room... Well then, please continue with your tales of adventure! The Princess said.”

“Pardon me, could I have a bit of your time, Onee-san? Mage Onee-san, this way please.”

When I heard what she said, I went to a corner of the room and gestured for the mage to follow.

“Is there anything I can do for you? ...Ahh, just call me Rain. Don’t need to use honorifics with me. I might be a noble, but I came from a small house that can’t compare with the Dustiness House. As the friend of Lady Dustiness, your status is probably higher than mine...”

The mage Onee-san said something like this.

“I see. Well then, Rain-san, I have something to ask.”

“I already said there is no need for honorifics... Using my name directly is fine too... What do you wish to ask?”

Rain seemed to feel it was a pity for some reason, but I wasn't that dense that I would call an older aristocratic woman I have never met before by her name directly.

Also, I was just lectured at Darkness' home by the white suited woman for being insolent.

The other party might be agreeable to this, but Darkness who could cover for me if anything happened wasn't here, so I didn't dare to do as I please.

I kept one eye on the Princess who looked bored and whispered:

“Erm, Rain-san... I hope you could explain the situation... The Princess said she is treating me as a guest... But this abduction right?”

“It's not like that. We are welcoming you as a guest. This is not an abduction.”

“No, this is obviously a kidnapping.”

Rain ignored my retort, bent forward slightly and whispered:

“... Her highness Iris always restrains herself, acts like a model royalty, is obedient and won't give trouble to others. This is the first time in her life that she did something like this. In this city, Princess Iris had no playmates that matched her status and age. Since this is the first time Princess Iris is acting wilfully, could you play with her for a short period of time?”

.....Ehh.

“No no no, even if you say that... To be frank, I finished all of my adventuring stories just now. Could you tell that to her highness and let me go back? Just say that I have basically run out of adventuring tales the Princess enjoys so much.”

After Rain heard what I said, she went back to the Princess to explain my situation.

After that...

“I brought you here in order to get back at Lalatina who hit me a little bit, it is sort of a prank...”

The Princess listened to Rain interpret with a depressed face.

“... Also, I feel envious after seeing Lalatina and you all having fun together... Sorry about the sudden wilful request. Just for a bit, a few days, can you play with me? The Princess said.”

... Wasn't she rather cute?

Which meant she wanted me to be the Princess' playmate for the time being?

If I rejected her and spoiled the Princess' mood, Darkness' standing would fall too...

“... I understand. Well then, I will tell you about Darkness... Lalatina. Rain-san, my comrades will worry about me, could you inform them that I will be staying here for some time?”

Rain said “I understand,” and left the room in response to my request.

And of course, this luxurious room only had the Princess and I left.

There were also two female knights standing by outside, probably the Princess' guards.

But was it really fine for the young Princess to be in the same room as a man so late at night? Would they be okay for a suspicious person they just met to stay with the Princess? Well, it only turned out this way because of the Princess' willfulness, but if the King or some other big shot found out, would it antagonize them— all sorts of negative thoughts flooded my head.

Princess smiled as if she had seen through my worries.

“Father, the general, and Onii-sama have set off on an expedition to the city near to the demon king army battle frontlines. If nothing serious happened, it would be fine... When it is just the two of us, use your usual tone with Lalatina... No, you all address her as Darkness right? Erm, speak to me like how you usually converse with Darkness... Please tell me about all sorts of things outside the castle.”

She sat onto the bed inside the room as she said that.

Part 2

The white suited woman returned after sorting out the paperwork.

“Excuse me... Your Highness, the paperwork is done. Now, Kazuma-dono is now an official guest, and can stay in the castle without worries...”

The story I was telling the Princess was at its climax.

“And so, Darkness said ‘Ugh... why, why did it become like this...’ and the naked Darkness went around to my back, her face blushing to the tip of her ears. Grabbing the towel tight, she shyly...!”

“Sh-Shyly...! Shyly did what...!?”

“What shyly! What nonsense are you telling Princess Iris, you want to be turned into minced meat ahhhh!?”

The white suited woman rushed before me as if she was trying to protect the Princess leaning forward and engrossed in my story. She shouted angrily and drew her sword while doing so.

“W-Wait a minute! Please wait! Iris asked me to...!”

“A mere adventurer dare address Princess Iris by her name...! You shall address her as Princess! And what is with your tone towards her huhhh!?”

How annoying!

“Hold it, Claire, I requested Kazuma-sama to address me by name. I also asked for him to speak in a natural way. In, instead of that, Kazuma-sama, Lalatina she...! What did the naked Lalatina do after grabbing her towel tightly!?”

“Princess Iris, no! You can't ask that, Kazuma-dono, please don't say such things to Her Highness! And, and why is a peasant and Lady Dustiness erm... Ba-bathing together... T-That's a lie right?”

The Princess had been clenching her fist tightly on the bed and listening to my story engrossingly.

While the Princess said “quick quick” to urge me to continue the story, I sat on the chair in the room and was bombarded with questions by the white suited woman named Claire who was as persistent as the Princess.

“Everything I said is true. If you don’t believe me, you can test it out. There should be one of that thing in such a big castle right? It’s found in the police station of large cities, that thing that will ring loudly if you tell a lie, used during interrogations. If there is one, I won’t mind you bringing it here.”

When she heard what I said, she seemed to understand that I wasn’t lying.

“I will take your word for it, since I did doubt you at Dustiness’ mansion just now... H-however, please don’t tell such things to Princess Iris!”

Claire finally sheathed her sword, and said to me with a glare:

“Princess Iris will be the one to decide whether she wants to listen. It doesn’t make sense for her to listen to the opinion of a minion like you. We were just getting to the good part when you came in and ruined the mood! Go away! I’m going to continue can you please leave!?”

“What a joke, how can I let you continue!? And I am not a minion you insolent fool! I am the elder daughter of House Symphonia that can even match House Dustiness which you are so close with. As the escort of Her Highness...”

Ignoring Claire who was blowing her own horn for some reason, I said to the Princess:

“Since the white suited woman is throwing a fit and object to this topic, let’s talk about something else.”

“W-What do you mean by white suited woman you lowly brash man, address me as Lady Claire! Ahh, really, what is with this man... Lady Dustiness must have had a difficult time...!”

The Princess was probably concerned about the persistent Claire and showed an expression as if thinking that it was a pity.

“It can’t be helped... It’s a pity, but let’s hear that story next time.”

Claire sighed deeply in relief when she heard the Princess being so sensible.

I see, so it was true that she wasn’t wilful normally.

“Well then, let’s talk about something else. I was having a competition with Darkness, and we made a bet that the loser will receive an amazing punishment. In the end I won and...”

“P-Please tell me quick! Please tell me about this!”

“No, you can’t! You can’t Your Highness, don’t listen to what this man is saying! This man is a good for nothing!”

Part 3

It was probably deep into the night.

Claire who had been listening to my stories together with the Princess all this while had been busy raging, raging, and raging again.

Laying on the bed the Princess was sitting on drowsily, Claire probably was exhausted from being angry and dozed off.

As for the Princess, she really liked my stories and had no intention to sleep at all, listening to me enthusiastically.

We had become friendly with each other and our tone turned casual.

And I shared all my stories of adventure and things about my comrade until I ran out...

“Really? Please tell me in detail about this school place and its cultural festival!”

“Details... Eh, kids about Iris’s age will perform all sorts of practical activities. Such as a cafe-like shop.”

The topic shifted to the country I was from.

I didn’t say that it was an alternate world, just that it was a far away nation.

I only mentioned how it was like in my school life, and the Princess looked so envious, imagining about this unknown country in her head.

There were no monsters and children about the Princess’ age learn and play peacefully each day.

It was a boring everyday life to me, but to the Princess...

“What a fantastic and happy place. That really is... Ahh, but running a shop with people my age... What should we do if bad customers who refuse to pay come? And it will take a lot of people to run the shop right? Can we really earn enough profit to pay everyone...?”

Thinking back, it was quite an envious life.

I smiled and looked at the Princess who was much younger than me:

“Running the shop is for our own enjoyment... Not to make money. Putting it frankly, it is to a game to enjoy running a shop. Everyone will wear the same uniform and tout for customers outside. We are only doing this because it is fun.”

After hearing what I said, the Princess had a look of envy and seemed a little bit lonely.

That was to be expected, this girl was the Princess after all.

She didn’t have normal peasant friends, and couldn’t go to school.

In the end, aside from the highly knowledgeable and independent Crimson Magic Clan, there wasn’t mandatory education in this world.

Now that I think about it, their scale was small, but the Crimson Magic Clan was really smart if they could implement a system to send all the children to school.

... Leaving their personality aside.

The Princess muttered enviously... *School.*

I said thoughtlessly to the Princess: “If you like it, how about building a school here? I think it would be very beneficial without any drawbacks. It would definitely be helpful for the kingdom.”

When she heard what I said, the Princess wanted to say something, but held her peace.

...?

As I was feeling baffled, bells that echoed through the night sounded out.

The sleeping Claire jumped up from the bed when she heard that.

She just woke up, but Claire immediately regained her usual calm and composure.

“... So, it’s here again.”

She muttered to herself and got up and charge out of the room.

What did she mean by ‘again’?

Before I even asked, a loud voice ruptured through the quiet night.

That was the broadcast that I would sometimes hear in Axel when there was an emergency quest.

“Demon king army alert, Demon king army alert! The knight corps have already moved out. All adventurers please maintain the peace and security within the city and stop any monsters from infiltrating in. All high level adventurers please come forth to assist!”

After hearing that broadcast, the Princess had a lonely and fragile smile.

“With how things are, I couldn’t focus on academics leisurely.”

She mumbled to herself.

I remembered what Aqua said to me before I came to this world.

Ahhh, this world was in trouble because of the demon king.

Part 4

“We have successfully suppressed the night raid by the demon king army. Thank you, adventurers for your assistance. We will reward everyone who took part in the emergency quest. Please head to the adventurers guild counter...”

This broadcast was heard less than one hour after Claire rushed out with her sword.

It was resolved really splendidly.

However, this was the royal capital, were things going that badly if even such a place suffered a night raid?

What were those people with cheats from Japan doing, I wished they could be more serious about this.

I would probably be retorted ‘*that’s not what someone as useless as you should say*’.

Really, I want to leave this dangerous place that was so close to the front lines.

I wonder if my thoughts were reflected on my face.

“Thank you for telling me so many interesting things. Rain will send you back to your town tomorrow... Can I trouble you to tell Lalatina that I am sorry? For bringing you to this place... It might not be the frontlines, but it would be attacked every now and then, so it wasn’t completely safe.”

The princess probably said this out of concern for me.

... That’s right, I wouldn’t be able to protect the city or be of use even if I stayed here.

I felt bad for Her Highness, but it would be better for me to leave this dangerous place earlier.

“Thank you for accommodating my willfulness tonight, Kazuma-sama... If there is the chance, can you tell me stories of your adventures next time?”

Her Highness said with a smile befitting her age.

... Isn't she really cute?

I didn't mind telling tales of my adventures to this girl sheltered by her vassals in this huge castle and didn't have any friends about her age...

I am slightly moved by the innocent smile of this traditional, beautiful girl, and in order not to reveal my emotions, I replied with a smile:

“Of course. To be frank, I am actually quite timid and wish to go back earlier... But, erm, for Iris' sake, I will gather all sort of stories of adventurers and come back again.”

When she heard what I said, Her Highness said shyly with joy from the bottom of her heart:

“Hehe, thank you. I feel that you are just like my Onii-sama from long ago. He might be my Onii-sama by blood, but royal siblings will become strangers after some time. My own brother won't chat with me like this anymore... I wish you could stay with me a while longer, but if I keep acting so wilfully...”

“What did you say just now?”

I asked after hearing the Princess' casual chatter.

“... Eh? W-well... I said that I wish you could stay with me a while longer...”

Her Highness replied shyly.

But that was wrong, not that part.

“What did you say before that? Before that line, what am I like...?”

The Princess heard what I said and replied:

“Erm... I feel that you are just like my Onii-sama from long ago...”

“Please say it again.”

Her Highness was a bit troubled but she still humoured me:

“Y-you are like my Onii-sama.”

“Can you say it more intimately, again...”

She said to me.

“Like my Onii-chan.”



And so, I chose to stay in this castle.

Part 5

There was knocking on the door that wasn't too loud or displeasing.

I opened my eyes after hearing that sound, and felt confused by the unfamiliar room I was sleeping in.

“Kazuma-sama, have you woken? I am here to bring you breakfast.”

After hearing that voice from outside the door, I remembered what happened last night.

That's right. I would be staying in this castle from this day forth.

“Good morning, I'm up.”

I shouted towards the door, and an elderly man with white hair entered after saying ‘pardon me’.

I pushed myself off the bed and saw that elderly man who was probably a butler pushing a breakfast cart in.

I will call him Sebastian then.

“Today's breakfast is Lesser Dragon Bacon with fried egg, and salad with plenty of asparagus. Please choose a bread you prefer to go with your meal. The salad is made from fresh ingredients picked earlier this morning. The asparagus have powerful attacks, be careful not to get hit.”

The elderly man said plenty of things I want to retort, placed breakfast besides my bed and excused himself.

It was a surprise that the powerful dragons in fantasy worlds were served to me as a bacon, but the high attack power of asparagus made me concerned too.

Let's start from the low difficulty item...

Without any care for etiquettes, I propped myself up on the bed and poked the fried egg with my fork.

“Chu.”

... Chu?

I was very surprised when the fried egg made such a sound. While I was inspecting the plate carefully, my door was knocked once again.

“Please come in.”

I gave up eating the egg and answered. The door opened gently.

And then...

“..... G-good morning...”

Hiding half of her body behind the door, Iris said with a soft and shy voice.

— As Iris glanced this way while hiding behind the door, she kept fidgeting and didn't came in.

What was with such a refreshing reaction.

If it was the group of females around me— they would either shout in front of my door, barged in or threaten to break the door with magic if I don't come out.

“... M-morning, Your Highness Iris. We chatted for so long last night, but you still got up very early.”

“Erm, if you can speak to me as intimately as yesterday in this castle, it will make me very happy...”

The two of us greet each other stiffly and looked at each other.

We were close last night, but that was at night and both of us were rather hyped then.

Iris had calmed down in the morning.

She glanced at me from time to time shyly.

“Is that so? How about trying it again?”

“Yes!... G-good morning. O-O-onii-chan...!”

My mood improved drastically because of her ‘Onii-chan’, but I would frighten Iris if I stood up suddenly.

Keeping in mind I need to act gentlemanly, I got down from the bed and spoke with an easy smile.

She was probably feeling embarrassed because of my mature actions, Iris who was blushing slightly looked very cute.

“Good morning, Iris.”

“... Erm, please wear your pants...”

— After tidying my attire and finishing my meal, I took a walk around the castle together with Iris.

“That’s not it Iris. Onii-chan is not a pervert. It just happened that I didn’t have my pajamas with me so I slept in my underwear.”

“I get it I get it, so stop talking about that, Onii-sama!”

After that incident in the morning, Iris refused to address me as Onii-chan.

Onii-sama felt distance, which made me sad.

When I asked what should I do in the castle, I was told that I just need to tell Iris about something she didn’t know or was of interest to her.

“Which means I just need to be Iris’ teacher.”

“No, not really. My teachers are Claire and Rain, so Onii-sama is, eh, my playmate...”

Iris who was walking besides me softened her voice from guilt and finally lowered her head.

The one with the highest status in this city was this child, so she could just state what she wanted and let the others abide by her will.

Was there a way to correct her introvertistic personality?

A child receiving such a high level of education was surprisingly matured, so she had probably considered how her actions would affect those around her.

She was aware of the authority royalty wielded, and how much trouble she would cause by being wilful.

The mage Rain told me that bringing me to the castle was the first time she acted wilfully.

She also wanted to get back at Darkness by bringing me here, but it wasn't a bad deal to enjoy a luxurious lifestyle just by being a playmate.

While we were discussing all these, Iris and I made it to the courtyard.

There were a table with a parasol and chairs, with a board game laid out.

"Actually, I don't have lessons today, so I hope you could play this game with me..."

Iris asked timidly as if she was afraid that her invitation would be rejected.

I sat on the chair and said while placing the pieces onto the board. "I am not a vassal of Iris' House, so I won't drag it into a draw and lose on purpose. If we are going to play, we should go about it seriously. I don't think I will lose in a game alright? Are you fine with that?"

"O-okay! That's what I would prefer! No one in the castle wants to be my opponent out of reverence for me! I am fine with losing! It is fine even if I lose, so please have a game with me!"

"That's the spirit! Don't cry if you lose okay? If I made the Princess cry, it would be troubling in all sorts of ways! I'm going for it! If we are going to do this seriously, we should bow before we start. Please take care of me!"

"Please take care of me!"

And so, I took up a piece from the board...!

"... Erm, erm, the sky's getting dark, can we call it a day?"

"Don't joke with me, you want to run after winning!? Didn't I tell you that you have to give it your all!? I can finally see through Iris' moves, just a bit more and I can win! By the way, don't even think about going easy on me because you want to end this early! I will know if you lose on purpose!"

"You are the one who wanted to play seriously, so how did it turn out like this? Onii-sama is so troublesome!"

"Noisy! I hate this game anyway! I have a comrade who likes this game too, it irritates me whenever I see her use teleport!"

"Even if you tell me that—!"

Claire who was shocked rushed towards us as we were arguing.

"I came to get Princess Iris because dinner is ready— but what are you doing! What kind of tone is that, and stop throwing tantrums! Admit your loss obediently and go to the dining hall before the food gets cold! Don't give Iris unnecessary troubles!"

"Damn it, we will decide on the match tomorrow since Claire is interfering! But I will definitely win next time!"

“A kid! Onii-sama is a kid!”

“Onii-sama!? Y-your Highness Iris, by Onii-sama you mean this man!?”

The sound of Claire and I arguing reverberated in the classy and quiet castle.

From this day forth, I took up the role of being the Princess’ playmate.

Part 6

Rain’s voice came from inside the room.

“— And that is why, each generation of royalty is born with more talent than normal people. Taking the heroes who defeated the demon king into the family as a husband is not just to reward the hero.”

She seemed to be teaching history, but I knocked on the door without hesitation.

“... Kazuma-sama, my apologies. Now is the time for Iris’ lessons, can you come back later?”

The teacher Rain said expressionlessly.

“How long is ‘later’? Five minutes?”

“No, the history lesson will last until evening...”

Looking into the room, Iris who saw me was a bit restless.

This seemed to be the first time someone invited her to play, so she was happy about it.

However, she didn’t mention that she want to stop the lesson and play outside, and seemed a bit troubled.

“It can’t be helped then, I will kill some time outside.”

“That’s a big help. I won’t keep you then...”

I walked out of the room as Rain sighed in relief.

Iris seemed a bit lonely when I left the room, but it couldn’t be helped.

I went to the courtyard and prepared myself right below Iris’ classroom...

“I want to fly freely in the sky~ Go, bamboo dragonfly!”

I sang the song everyone knew loudly and set off the bamboo dragonfly Vanir refused to develop. At this moment, the window opened suddenly.

“Kazuma-sama! Iris’ attention is focusing outside the window, please don’t sing and play over there!”

— Killing time while disrupting the lesson, I finally grind through the time and see Iris charging here. It seemed that she had finished her lesson.

“Onii-sama, what is that magic item just now!? You looked like you were having so much fun, can you let me play too...”

Iris probably came here in a hurry and was out of breath.

“Oh, you mean this? This is a high quality magic item that has been enchanted with wind magic. There are no limits to its usage. You just need to turn it like this and it will fly off.”

“How amazing! A magic item with unlimited usage— Isn’t that a divine class item!?”

I handed the bamboo dragonfly to Iris who believed me easily.

“If you play that game with me and accept my condition, I can give it to you if you like.”

“R-really!? I accept, I accept! Please tell me what the condition is!”

— Ten minutes later.

“Checkmate! Yeah! I am the winner!”

“Alright alright, it’s my loss. Really, Onii-sama is just like a kid.”

“Oh? Acting all high and mighty after you lost. Okay, I will give you the bamboo dragonfly as agreed.”

“Thank, Thank you very much! ... But, is this really fine? Just giving up one chess piece as a handicap for a magic item...”

Iris held the bamboo dragonfly preciousy and said with guilt.

... Suddenly someone spoke to us.

“So you are here, Princess Iris. Leaving me, your escort behind and running off by yourself is really... Uwah, Kazuma-sama. Is that a bamboo dragonfly? An adventurer with a strange name I met in the past made something similar for me.”

Rain seemed to have been searching for Iris who dashed out the moment the lesson ended.

“Rain knows how this magic item is made? Amazing, this can rival a divine class item...!”

“Magic item? No, this... is made from bamboo, something like a toy for kids. Anyone can make one after learning the way to craft it...”

Before Rain even finished, Iris glared at me with tears in her eyes.

“Onii-sama is a liar! I won’t acknowledge such schemes, the match just now don’t count!”

“Oh, what about it? I already said yesterday that I will give my best to win. If I am not as good as the opponent, I just need to gain an advantage in some other way. The situation right now is that I found Iris’ weak point of being unworldly and won a tactical victory... Refusing to admit your loss, Your Highness Iris is so hard to please!”

“Then, then one more match! We will do it again! The same conditions as just now!”

“Ara, it is almost time for dinner. Look, Claire is here to fetch us. Today is my complete victory.”

Iris requested for a rematch but I rejected her, the opposite of what happened yesterday.

The one who saw us like this was Claire who came to fetch us for dinner—

“Are you trying to run after winning!? That is so unfair, one more time! Help me convince him Claire! Please!”

“Hey Claire, tell Iris the exact same phrase you told me yesterday! Tell her to admit her lost obediently and go to the dining hall before the food gets cold! Say it, quick! Don’t take her side just because she is a Princess!”

Caught between us, Claire was at a loss—

“— Iris, have you thought about going outside to play? I don’t mean going to a city like Axel, but to hike around and go sightseeing. There are many things in this world that we don’t understand. There might be weird devils with good reputations in the neighbourhood, or a friendly lich that eat bread crumbs as her standard meal.”

After Iris finished her lesson in the morning, we went to the balcony of Iris’ room which was the top most level, and played games while drinking tea.

“If I leave the castle, an order of knight would need to be assigned to be my escort. And I am not permitted to leave the capital alone without my vassals... Also, there is no way such devils and liches exist. Please don’t look down on me because I am unworldly... ‘Teleport’ to this grid.”

Iris moved her chess piece on the board as she stared at me with doubtful eyes.

She seemed to be wary of me because of what happened yesterday.

Rain who was beside me didn’t join in the conversation and simply poured tea into the empty teacup.

After moving my piece, I said:

“You don’t believe me huh. In this world, there are many things that couldn’t be explained with common sense. Do you know? Normally, fish are usually caught in the sea or river, but saury are caught in the farmlands.”

“That is obviously a lie okay!?”

“I-it’s true! When I was working in a restaurant, I was asked to go to the farm behind to catch saury!”

“That, that is... Onii-sama was fooled...”

Rain whispered to Iris who said something rude: “Your Highness Iris, Kazuma-sama is not lying. Saury are caught in the farm.”

“Is that true!? How could it be... A dog flying in the sky would be more believable...”

“I have never seen a dog flying in the sky, but I did saw a cat that spit fire before.”

“That is definitely a lie! Liar! You are a big liar!!”

“It’s true! My comrade has one!!”

“Ka-Kazuma-sama, that is really...”

“Even Rain! Damn it, even though I didn’t lie this time!!”

Iris said to me as I was rapping the table in frustration.

“You lost focus, Onii-sama. My plan worked! Alright, it’s my win!”

She checked me with a smile that befitted her age.

Part 7

Iris was becoming more and more witty lately.

The honest and straightforward Iris that I met was gone.

... Really, even though it was great that she was smiling more, but I think she was completely looking down on me.

And as a gamer, I couldn’t accept losing in games indefinitely.

Even if it was to get back the dignity of an elder brother, I need to make it clear with her who was better.

It had almost been a week since I came to this castle.

Iris had gradually grown close to me, and I had also gotten used to life in the castle.

— It was probably noon.

Iris’ schedule today was to have lesson until three in the afternoon.

That day.

After waking up, I didn’t plan to get down from my soft bed, but clapped my hands instead.

This was to summon the butler before the door.

The one who appeared was an elderly man with white hair wearing the attire of a butler.

“What can I do for you, Kazuma-sama.”

I said to the elderly man bowing deeply at me.

“Could I trouble you to prepare some coffee to freshen me up, Sebastian?”

That’s right, my personal butler, Sebastian.

“It’s Heidel.”

“Thank you, Heidel.”

It was Heidel.

After asking for coffee from the butler Heidel, I laid down onto my bed again.

There was another task waiting for me to begin the day.

The maid Mary will come and change the sheets later.

However, I couldn’t let her change the sheets so easily.

I had to obstruct the maid in all sorts of way to stop her from completing her work.

This was the hobby of the nobles.

When I made Darkness act like a maid, she said that so it couldn't be wrong.

Before Iris' lessons end, I would kill time by teasing the maid.

Finally, there was a knocking on the door.

"Good morning Mary. But don't think I will you change the sheets so easily alright? Come, if you want to quickly finish changing the sheets and go about your other chores, you need to say this. 'Master, please...'"

But the one who entered was Darkness.

"... Master, please...? What's next, Kazuma, go on. Here, let everyone here have a listen. Continue."

Behind Darkness who had a scarily serious expression were the dumbstruck Aqua and Megumin.

"M-Master, please allow me to use the sheets filled with your fragrance..."

"Do what to the sheets filled with your fragrance? What, isn't sexual harassment the norm for you? Stop acting shy and hurry up! Say it to everyone here!"

"S-spare me...! Anyway, why are you doing here Darkness!? This room is a sanctuary bestowed to me! Who gave you permission to come in!?"

Hearing me lash out in frustration, Darkness' brow started to burrow...!

"You are asking me why I am here!? To bring you back, of course! Really, how long are you going to trouble them here, go back with me at once! Why, why did you do something so out of place? Megumin was so worried about you being caught up in some trouble and couldn't sleep!"

"I-I'm not that worried!? I just happened to stay up a few nights. Don't misunderstand!"

I wanted to question Megumin who was making excuses in a panic, but I heard something that I couldn't just ignore.

"Don't joke with me, I took up the position of Iris' playmate! I want to live happily in this castle, don't get in the way of my peaceful life!"

"Moron! There is no such job in this country! Listen up, Kazuma. You have no reason to stay in this castle. It is bad to keep a man with an unknown background in the castle!"

"Then I will be Iris' teacher or something! That unworldly Princess who gets deceived easily will be trained properly by me! By the way, what about you? In terms of unworldliness, you are on the same level as Iris!"

"Why, you really...! Teacher huh, I already heard all that from Claire! Because of you, Iris received weird influences! When she was taking military and battle tactics lessons, she would use absurd strategies or despicable methods...! Unlike adventurers, royalties and knights have to fight honourably! Don't teach her your unscrupulous way of fighting! Aqua, you tell him too!!"

Having been called by Darkness, Aqua who was furious said to me with her hands on her hips:

"That's right, it's not fair that only Kazuma gets to live in the castle! Everyone worked together to defeat the demon king army bosses right!? If Kazuma gets to live in the castle, I should be able to live here too!"

“Be quiet Aqua, you are making things more complicated!”

Darkness pushed Aqua who was complaining that it was unfair for me to get the rewards alone and took a step forward.

“Huh, what? You lost the last time we competed and you still want to challenge me? Even though I think of a muscle brained sheltered lady, but you actually lack the ability to learn huh. I want to live a carefree and happy life in this safe castle. Go back if you don’t want me to make you cry!”

“... Alright, I will take you on. Everyone, please wait outside the room for a while.”

Darkness who was wearing a one piece dress and didn’t even have any weapon said that to me.

The group shuffled out of the room when they heard that while I smiled with confidence.

“Are you serious? You think you can win without your armour and weapon? You are wearing just a flimsy and pretty dress today. If you take a hit from my steal that has certain kill properties in battle, you would end up in a disastrous state.”

“Just try me.”

Darkness treated my words as baseless intimidation and said curtly.

“... Do you really understand? If you wear so little, you will end up naked after taking three hits from steal. I can still forgive you now...”

“I said try me.”

Darkness cut me off and took another step forward.

“Hey, are you kidding me? Is this really okay? I really will do it alright?”

“I’ve already said, try me if you dare! It’s just you and me here! Come, strip me now if you dare!”

This girl didn’t care about that!

“Wait, I get it, let’s talk this over calmly!”

“There is nothing to talk about, I’ve already steeled myself! You can sexual harass others lightly, but are a coward who doesn’t dare to cross that line, strip me if you can! If you strip me and push me down, you can do whatever you want to me! Try me if you have the guts!”

“The one in charge of the erotic stuff! You really are the one in charge of the erotic stuff! I will call you EroNess from now on! Ahhhh it’s breaking it’s breaking! I’m sorry for lying! Some, someone save me!”

Darkness easily grabbed my wrist and pushed me face down. I cried at the door for help.



The one who responded was...

“Er, erm... Lalatina...! Please don’t overdo it...”

Iris who ended her lesson early and came to look for me to play.

Iris seemed a little timid, but she still raised her head and spoke out.

She was hit by Darkness once before, but even so, my sister still tried to help me bravely—

“Princess Iris, you can’t spoil this man! He is a lustful beast wearing the skin of a man. He will bath together with any girl he sees, or steal their panties with skills. That’s the kind of man he is. I will be the sacrifice, so Your Highness, please wait outside...!

After Iris left, I will give this girl hell like what she said.

Specifically speaking, I mean stripping her.

Don’t think I will just be gutless til the very end...!

Iris seemed really depressed when Darkness said that.

“.....”

She didn’t say a word and fell into lonely silence.

“Ugh... P-Princess Iris...”

Even Darkness found it hard to handle Iris.

Seeing how lonely Iris looked, I maintained my posture and shouted:

“Hey~ making the Princess so sad, you are really the worse it hurts it hurts it hurts!”

“You shut up! ... Your Highness Iris, please listen to me. In the mansion inside Axel, this man has some fame as an adventurer. His friends will worry about him if he goes missing. We came here today out of concern for him too... That’s why, can you please let this man go?”

Iris nodded gently with a sad expression when she heard what Darkness said.

“... You are right. Sorry for being so wilful...”

Work hard Iris, just a bit more!

Don’t give up, you have the highest authority in this castle, you can afford to be more wilful!

Iris who was lowering her head suddenly raised it and faced Darkness.

“Lalatina, in that case, at least for tonight... Can I host a farewell dinner party...?”

She pleaded hesitantly.

Part 8

A dinner party for nobles and royalty.

It was simply too extravagant.

“Hey Kazuma, this is super delicious! This natural melon together with dry-cured ham! This seem to be really fresh wild honeydew, it is really juicy.”

“Kazuma, Kazuma, this is really tasty too... Nom. The high class pudding on the sushi complements the wasabi and soy sauce! I don't know what dish this is, but the sticky sweetness is mixing with the sauce, making it thick but not greasy...!”

Watching my companions eating the dishes ferociously, I understood how out of place we commoners were.

We borrowed suits and dresses from the castle to dress up, so our appearances matched the event. However, our atmosphere was out of place when compared to the other guests.

Several bartenders hired for this occasion stood at a corner of the hall and mixed cocktails according to the wishes of the guest. But Aqua felt it was a hassle to go to them for seconds, so she dragged her table filled with food before the bartenders and started feasting there.

Megumin who was beside me was filling her empty containers with food hastily.

Normally, someone who would feel embarrassed by this would restrain them...

“Lady Dustiness, it's a rare sight to see you at such a party, since you dislike them! Ara, I'm so glad that I came tonight! Thanks to that, I get to see the beautiful you!”

“Lady Dustiness, is your father Lord Ignis doing well? I once served under Lord Ignis when I was young...”

“Ahh, Lady Dustiness! I thank the Goddess of Luck Eris for letting me meet you tonight! I have heard of your beauty for the longest time, but you are more beautiful than I imagined...!”

“Really, seeing is believing! Compared to your beauty, even the mystical one night flower that blooms once every century, the moonlight rose loses its luster before you! I know of a place that will suit you. After this party is done, may I have the honour of escorting you?”

“No no no, sir, your house is probably not good enough to escort Lady Dustiness. Please allow me to...”

Darkness was surrounded by a group of nobles, basking in their compliments that reeks of sourness.

As for Darkness herself, she probably had gotten used to such a situation as she rejected their invitation tactfully with a gentle smile.

“Thank you everyone for your warm reception. I am not used to parties, so I hope everyone will go easy on me please.”

I wanted to retort and ask ‘who are you?’

The face of Darkness who was acting like a quiet and gentle lady was cramping.

Maybe she was having a hard time too.

But, she was really popular.

And those surrounding Darkness were young handsome guys with blonde hair and blue eyes.

.....

“So there you are, Lalatina. Oh, you are really popular huh, Lalatina. Your dress suits you really well today, don’t you agree, Lalatina?”

I suddenly sauntered up to her and address her as Lalatina continuously, making Darkness spit out the red wine in her mouth.

“Puah! Cough, ex-excuse me!”

The nobles around her all looked at me in surprise as Darkness wiped her mouth with a handkerchief with tears in her eyes.

“Why the sudden comments, adventurer comrade Satou Kazuma-sama? It would trouble me if you keep calling me by that name in such a place. You sure are mischievous, wouldn’t that lead the others to misunderstand our relationship?”

She maintained her pretty smile and said with strong emphasis on the ‘adventurer comrade’ part.

Really, who are you?

When they heard what Darkness said, the tension of the nobles eased.

“Haha, I was surprised when he addressed Lady Dustiness directly by name. In order to protect the people from monsters and out of interest, Lady Dustiness dabs into the adventurer’s line of work. Ara ara, I almost misunderstood their relationship to be closer than imagines.”

“Well said. However, as expected of Lady Dustiness’ companion, his joke is straight to the point. It might just be a prank, but I am envious that he get to address Lady Dustiness directly by name.”

“Very true, what an enviable position to be in... Speaking of which, has Lady Dustiness been betrothed to anyone yet? If not, please allow me to present myself as the lucky man who would get to address you by your name...”

“No, the honour should be left to me who has been proposing to the Dustiness House all this time...”

The aristocrats started persuading Darkness again, keeping each other in check and refusing to leave Darkness alone.

I was impressed by these handsome guys with money and power.

They sure were persistent and brimming with confidence.

Just when I was about to drop another bomb to tease her.

“—For Lady Dustiness who had been contributing greatly in recent years, there should be a more suitable candidate. At least, it is not the gentlemen gathered here.”

The man who interjected the conversation with such lofty words seemed really familiar.

Hairy body with thinning hair, a huge and fat middle aged man.

“Lord Alderp, that comment is really hurtful...”

Naturally, I won’t forget the lord of Axel town who tried to frame me and get me executed.

“Why the hell are you here?”

“You, it’s you! It’s all because you teleported the core of the destroyer to my mansion, that’s why I have to rebuild it! Before the mansion in Axel is finished, I can only stay in my villa inside the capital! And why is a mere peasant using ‘the hell’ before me!? Address me as Lord Alexei!”

Alderper yelled at me angrily.

So this old man has a villa, how rich.

“By the way, Lord Alderper, who is the man who can match Lady Dustiness? I heard some rumours that you are really obsessed with Lady Dustiness, could it be...”

The group pestering Darkness who was interrupted said sarcastically.

“Of course, it’s not referring to me. Ahh, and not my boy too alright? For Lady Dustiness, leaving her prestigious house aside, we have to consider her personal achievements. And so, there is only one man who is fit to be with Lady Dustiness.”

Alderper said mysteriously with a face of confidence.

A man who could match Darkness in terms of accomplishments.

“You mean me?”

“Things will become complicated, so shut up! Go over there and play with Aqua or Megumin!”

Maybe she couldn’t spare the effort anymore, Darkness’ mask started cracking as she lashed out at me.

Alderper ignored our exchange and said with a smile:

“He is the man commanding our forces alongside His Majesty in the war against the demon king army, His Highness, the First Prince Jatis. Normally, Lady Dustiness would need to take in a husband in order to inherit her father’s title, but they just need to have more children and let the younger one inherit the Dustiness house.”

The aristocrats all had a defeated expression when they heard that.

“Lord Dustiness who always worked in the frontlines is a given, and Lady Dustiness who defeated several bosses of the demon king's army is also a hero of the kingdom. Marrying his daughter into the royal family will be a fitting reward for Lord Dustiness. And the couple will definitely produce strong, beautiful, and excellent heirs... How about it, aren’t they the perfect match?”

I remember that this old man had a strange obsession towards Darkness.

Did he realize that Darkness was beyond his reach no matter how much he struggled, and finally given up?

“In-indeed...”

“The perfect match made in heaven...”

The nobles reluctantly backed off after hearing those words.

When Darkness was about to say something.

“Hey, what about your complicated relationship with me? Lalatina, are you going to ditch me!?”

“!?” x3

Everyone fell into shock after they heard my revelation.

“You you you, what are you saying out of the blue...! Wrong, such an incredible prank to pull, Kazuma-sama. I did mention that such mischief would trouble me in such a setting, right?”

Darkness reached out to me with a smile, as if she wanted to lock hands with a man she was closed to.

I dodged nimbly.

“Lalatina, think back to our sweet moments together! Didn’t we spend every day living under the same roof, and even bathed together!? Didn’t you wash my back!? Recently, you even called me Master in a special type of play...”

“Kazuma-sama, something incredible will happen if your mischief goes too far!”

To fend off Darkness who charged at me without any regards, I took her straight on, pushing each other with our hands clasped high.

“Ara, are you sure this is a good idea Lalatina!? Displaying your monstrous strength before the Lords and Nobles!? I’m at fault for stirring things up, but you need to marry someone eventually right? And you are at the age where it would be terrible for a noble if you don’t marry isn’t it? Young lady, if you show off that strength, no one would want you aahhhhhhh!?”

“Ara ara, Kazuma-dono, what exemplary acting! I am not using much force, but you are acting as if I am! I wonder what will happen if I go at it seriously!? Do you want to experience my power after I levelled up!?”

“You are going overboard with your joke Dustiness-sama!”

Part 9

— I only felt a little guilty.

Or rather, I felt angry seeing Darkness being this popular and went to disturb her naturally.

It was the feeling of seeing a female friend you were close to but don’t want to date, but felt repulsed about her becoming someone else’s girlfriend.

I was blinded by the rewards and pushed for Darkness’ marriage not too long ago, but now I am getting in her way after I became rich.

It was regrettable, but I am really wilful.

The party was supposedly held in my honour, but thanks to Darkness attracting all the attention, I was basically ignored.

... I wouldn’t be happy about the noble guys surrounding me, and I didn’t feel lonely either.

The aristocratic ladies were chatting with Aqua and Megumin, asking them what brand of shampoo they used and what kind of soap they prefer.

Yup, those girls look fine as long as they keep their gap shut.

... But, I was not envious or anything...!

“-- What are you doing in a place like this?”

Iris said to me as I was leaning against the wall in the corner watching everyone enjoying themselves.

“Iris, as expected of Iris! How gentle and considerate, Iris! I was by myself and all alone at the party, you are a great sister, Iris!”

“N-not really...”

When I showered her with praise, Iris muttered softly and lowered her blushing face.

Oh?

Recently, she would come to me unhesitantly and talk back, but she was really docile tonight.

Iris leaned against the wall besides me with her face flushed.

As it was a party within the castle, that annoying Claire won't stick by Iris' side.

Iris looked at the dazzling hall.

“From tomorrow onwards, this castle will quiet down too. Because the one that made Claire angry and troubled Rain has to go back.”

She said softly as she leaned against the wall.

“During this entire week, the two of them thought of me as an eyesore. By the way, isn't it great for the castle to become quiet? In my mansion, it is like a riot every day. If I could have one wish, I would wish to have a peaceful life.”

Iris who glanced at me from time to time while leaning on the wall had a sad smile.

... What was happening, just seeing her lonely actions tightened my chest.

Was I such an easy man?

“I shouldn't say this since I treated you like a little sister from day one, but Iris, you have gotten so close to me just after one week.”

To avoid being noticed that I was moved by a twelve year old kid, I tried diverting the topic.

“Did I troubled you?”

When she looked up and told me that shyly, I was shaken even further.

“No, I am really happy about this. However, I was wondering why you like someone like me so much.”

Somehow, I kept my stiff voice from leaking out and Iris giggled.

And then...

“This is the first time I met someone like you. Everyone keeps on their toes around me and showers me with concern. Only one person was lofty, rude, merciless, and taught all sorts of weird things to me, despite me being royalty. He even went all out to compete with me without any semblance of an adult...”

“Hey, I didn't ask you to list out things you are unhappy about me. I am asking what you like about me alright?”

I expressed my doubt after hearing Iris' words.

"But I am listing out the reasons I like you though?"

She said with a happy smile...

Damn, she was really cute!

Be it Eris-sama or Iris-- why do all the prim and proper girls have such a huge barrier from me?

No, I only see Iris as my sister.

Just treating her like a twelve year old kid!

"By the way, my win-loss records are better in that game, so it's my victory right?"

"Hey what do you mean by that, towards the end we split the games 50-50, or rather, I have more overwhelming wins. If we play on, it would definitely be my victory."

"Can't you just admit your loss honestly? Onii-sama is really a kid!"

"Ara, declaring your victory against a child, aren't you a child too!?"

After arguing with Iris momentarily, we finally got tired of it and leaned against the wall once again.

Really, being so stubborn to the end.

That might be so, but recently, Iris seemed happy even when she was bickering with me.

After that, Iris and I turned silent and stared at the party absent mindedly.

We talked a lot during this one week together, and I made her mad and made her smile. But for some reasons, the both of us were quiet.

Aqua and Megumin were stuffing themselves with food. Darkness was still being swarmed by nobles.

"My time spent with you during this one week, will definitely be a precious memory for me..."

Iris muttered to herself while looking at these scene.

"I am really envious of Lalatina. She must be having fun every day..."

She said with a lonely smile.

... She got this close to me in just one week.

If I go back, the child would need to suppress her personality to fulfil her obligation as royalty and act as a good child who is not wilful.

... Wasn't there any way for me to stay in this castle?

How about asking her to appoint me as a knight?

No no no, it would be hard for a weakling like me to get into the Knight Corps even with Iris and Darkness' influence. And the reason why I was being chased out was because of the bad influence I was giving Iris, and the fact that I wasn't contributing to this castle meaningfully.

... Maybe a boss of the demon king army would happen to attack?

If I defeat a boss of the demon king army elegantly, my place here would be acknowledged by others, and my slightly wilful request would be granted.

It would be fine even if it wasn't something that grand, what I wanted was accomplishment that would let me stay in the capital.

I felt that there would be less resistance against me that way...

While I was thinking over this silently, Iris said: "I want to be an adventurer just like Lalatina. All generations of royalty possess high potential for using magic alright?? I probably can't be a crusader like Lalatina... But what about a mage or priest? Or maybe... a thief, being something like the chivalrous thief that is the talk of the city would be nice! But would Claire be angry if I say that I want to be a thief?"

She giggled after saying so...

"... Hmm? What did you just say?"

Iris suddenly lift her head and looked at me, tilting her head puzzledly.

"Onii-sama, you don't know about the chivalrous thief who is the talk of the city? He seemed to be hitting the home of nobles with bad reputations and stealing the wealth they got through despicable means. And on the next day, a large donation would be made to an orphanage ran by the church of Eris... That's why the thief is known as the chivalrous thief."

Chivalrous thief...

"As a royalty, I probably shouldn't acknowledge someone who steals as a chivalrous thief... but don't you think it is cool? I might be situated on the side that was being stolen from... But even so, I still yearn for such a title a little."

When I see Iris' eyes that was sparkling, I felt jealous of the masked thief I had never seen before and wanted to capture him.

... Capture the chivalrous thief?

"... It's decided that it would be you ahhh!"

Part 10

"Darkness! Dark—ness! ... Ah, good, Claire is here too!"

"Why, why are you here again... I am busy, didn't I tell you to chill somewhere else?"

"H-how can I help you, Kazuma-dono..."

I rushed to Darkness and Claire who seemed annoyed their conversation was interrupted.

"Hey, listen to me! Isn't the capital in serious trouble!?"

The two of them seemed baffled when I said that.

"Well, it is rather troubling. The royal Princess is badly influenced by an adventurer, if news of her addressing that adventurer as Onii-sama is to reach his Majesty's ears, you will lose your head."

“As Lady Dustiness said, I have no intention of covering for you when his Majesty returns from the frontlines. I will report what happened in this castle truthfully.”

“No, not that! I am just accompanying and playing with a young lonely girl who is lonely because her parents are out! Instead of that!!”

I used a voice loud enough for the other nobles to hear.

“What I mean is the chivalrous thief committing crimes in the dark! I heard news about it! The thief is targeting the nobles residing in the capital!”

“That, that’s true, it seems that the nobles with bad reputations had been hit...”

“What do you mean to say, Kazuma-dono.”

In the face of the two confused grand noble, I pointed to my chest with my thumb.

“I will capture that chivalrous thief who disrupts the peace in the city.”

“Ah?” x2

Darkness and Claire were stunned.

At the same time, there was an uproar amongst the nobles.

“He wants to catch that thief, even though the knights and police couldn’t find any clue despite their extensive investigation?”

“Speaking of which, who is that man who had been loitering around suspiciously? I am concerned.”

“Shh! That plain looking man seems to be Lady Dustiness’ comrade...”

“That guy!? Instead of an adventurer, he looks just like a normal man!?”

“I remember he is a NEET who is Princess Iris’ playmate. I saw him being waited on by maids in the courtyard and taking a nap until evening.”

Hey you nobles, I heard that.

But I ignored their whisperings.

“Look, I am close to Darkness who is a noble right? From my point of view, this so-called chivalrous thief who steals from the homes of nobles, no matter how popular he might be with the weak, he is still my enemy. After all, he might target Darkness’ house next.”

“Hey hey! My house didn’t do any evil things that might attract the attention of the chivalrous thief!”

I clenched my fist and said loudly in response to Darkness who retorted dutifully.

“Don’t you agree, Darkness, if it is us who took down the boss of the demon king army, we will definitely be able to solve this case. After all, not only did we save Axel Town, we even resolved the crisis in Alcanretia and the Home of the Crimson Magic! It must be fate since we are here in the capital. Even though he is a chivalrous thief, stealing is still a crime. We can’t ignore this!”

“That, that’s true... But for someone without a sense of justice at all, what are you scheming? Just what do you want?”

It seemed that Darkness couldn't accept this completely and looked at me with suspicious eyes.

"Look here, if I catch this thief, I can ask to freeload in this castle..."

"I, have never seen such a thick-faced..."

When Claire who was dumbfounded was about to say something.

"Splendid!"

One of the nobles cheered for me.

The other nobles also joined in...

"As expected of Lady Dustiness' comrade! Ahhh, no, I didn't do anything that might make me a target of the thief."

"He seems to be a man who has fought with the boss of the Demon King Army before. Catching the thief must be a walk in the park for him."

"Although I have nothing to hide, it would be good if the thief is captured! Of course, I don't feel that I would be targeted."

This bunch was really easy to read.

... But this was the effect I was after.

This way, I could continue to stay in this castle using the excuse of capturing the thief.

If the thief was caught, I could stay here formally and receive some rewards too.

Even if I couldn't catch him, the longer the search, the longer I could stay with Iris.

The eyes of Iris who was behind me brimmed with expectation.

Really, you do like seeing your Onii-sama in action huh!

Leave it to me, after I laze around the castle for a while longer, I will catch the thief properly!

Claire looked at me and pondered for a moment, and knocked her fist on top of her open palm as if she figured out something.

"I understand. Kazuma-dono, please moved into the house of a noble you think would be targeted and stay on guard there. If you do catch the thief, I can consider letting you stay in the castle... Please don't hold back everyone, please do all you can to assist Kazuma-dono!"

... Huh?

Serving Divine Retribution to this Handsome Chivalrous Thief!

Part 1

I miscalculated.

My plan was to drag out the investigation so I could freeload in the castle.

After that night, the next morning.

“Really, will it kill you to not get involved in troublesome things? You even drag us all in. It can’t be helped, so I will assist you with this, so don’t complain about me. Really, Kazuma is so much trouble!”

“That’s right! This way, you can’t keep saying that we are troublemakers! Since you are our comrade, we’ll help you out. We won’t abandon you!!”

The two of them who did nothing but eat at the party last night said to me arrogantly.

I didn’t ask them to help me catch the thief, but after explaining the situation to them, they used this chance to put me in their debts.

The job this time was to capture the chivalrous thief, so I didn’t really need these two. However, they were really motivated to do this, so I didn’t stop them.

Right now, we had arrived at the house of the number one target that would be hit by the chivalrous thief.

“— And so, you came to my place without any hesitation?”

This was the villa of Alderp, the tyrannical lord of Axel Town.

All the nobles who got hit had a bad reputation with the people.

Judging from this, it wouldn’t be strange if this guy with terrible reputation was targeted. And so, we came here.

Alderp who came to receive us with his guards showed his displeasure, and without reservation, he looked at Darkness body with a hot gaze as if he was licking all her body.

I admit that Eroness had a really erotic body, as a guy who would look at Darkness when she finished her baths, I could empathize with him.

But staring at her body so rudely was too much.

Alderp probably noticed my gaze and glanced at me.

After throwing a cold look at me.

He then looked towards Aqua lacklusterly.

And stopped.

Aqua squeaked “Eek” softly and hid behind me.

“... Oh... Oh! As expected of Lady Dustiness’ companion, how beautiful! If I am to compare... That’s right! Your beauty... is just like a goddess!”

“What do you mean by just like a goddess, I am a goddess! I am one!”

Aqua poked her head out from behind me and protested.

“Haha, not only is your beauty exemplary, your sense of humour is great too!”

“Just wait for your divine retribution!”

Despite what Aqua roared, Alderp seemed to be treating that as a joke too.

His eyes moved on to Megumin...

“Oh, you are really...”

When he was about to say something.

The male guard beside the lord whispered something to him.

I couldn’t hear it clearly as they were quite far away...

“... My Lord... Please be careful... with your words... That is the legendary girl with her screw loose...”

“... So she is...! Dangerous... screw loose...!”

The Lord’s expression changed instantly as he conversed softly.

“Hey, why did you avert your eyes away from me, explain it to me. If you are lucky, I might show you personally if I am just like what that man described.”

“No no, erm... Ohh, you look really cute and pretty...”

“Oh, what else?”

Megumin pestered Alderp, who then looked at me for help.

“... Hey, aren’t you too stingy with your praise for the one who protects Axel Town every day? I will show you how powerful my explosion spell is, let me borrow your courtyard.”

“No, I fully understand how outstanding you are!”

... I decided to not get involved for now.

“B-but Lady Dustiness, are you implying that I am a notorious noble who might be targeted by the chivalrous thief? And I thought you would be unwilling to stay in my house, but you don’t seem to be against it. By the way, it pains me that the famous Lady Dustiness would believe the rumours against me circulating in the streets. If you think I am someone that the chivalrous thief will go after, please don’t hold back and stay as long as you wish.”

Alderp said sarcastically with a smile as he tried to keep us in check.

“No, we wouldn’t suspect you that way... This is just a part of the investigation...”

I walked past Darkness who was making excuses in a panic and entered the mansion.

“We have permission to stay as long as we want! I will be taking the largest guest room!”

“That’s unfair, Kazuma! I think we should decide after discussing it! I want the room nearest to the dining hall!”

“I want the room on the highest floor! I don’t mind living in the attic!”

After we entered the mansion, Darkness said a little sheepishly: “... My apologies, sorry for troubling you...”

“Ah, it’s fine... Erm, Lady Dustiness has it hard too...”

Alderper said sympathetically in a soft voice.

— The rumoured chivalrous thief seemed to be working alone.

He chose to only burgle the homes of nobles with a notorious reputation, and donates the loot to orphanages, a typical chivalrous thief.

And according to witnesses that somehow caught a glimpse of him, he seemed to be rather handsome.

Darkness said with a worried expression: “What the chivalrous thief is doing is a crime and not worthy of praise. That might be so... but I still feel bad about catching the rumoured chivalrous thief...”

In the Alderper Mansion.

Everyone had gathered in the best guest room that I was occupying to discuss the strategy to deal with that chivalrous thief.

“That might be so, but stealing is still stealing. I hate handsome guys working under the fake banner of *‘friend of the weak’* and *‘saviour of peasants in trouble’* the most.”

When they heard what I said, Darkness and Megumin looked at me with a strange expression.

“... How should I put this... Your face isn’t that bad, so you don’t need to demean yourself that much. I had been wondering about this for some time, do you have some trauma with the term ‘handsome guy’? I am willing to listen if you want to vent it out alright?”

“I think Kazuma looks pretty good though. I think you need to be more confident.”

“D-don’t do that, why are you all treating me so gently? I will feel really narrow hearted so stop... What is it Aqua, you looked more serious than ever, what do you want?”

Aqua smiled gently at me.

“Thou hikkikomori who is at a lost. Don’t blame thyself too much... It is the world’s fault that thou don’t want to work hard, it is thy environment’s fault that thy personality is twisted, it is thy gene’s fault for being ugly. Don’t blame thyself, just push the blame to others...”

“Don’t joke with me, my self esteem is not that low! Looks aside, my character is...! Hey, stop that, why are you all smiling wryly!? In the end, my appearance is still at the average standard! Hey... don’t come near me so gently!”

I shooed the three of them who were acting more gently than ever away, and begun formulating the plan to capture the chivalrous thief.

The chivalrous thief seemed to be working between midnight and dawn.

After coming to this world and going through all of sorts of hell, my instincts told me that this villa would be targeted next.

I had a feeling that this would be a long battle.

Part 2

— The next day after moving into this mansion.

I came out of the room that I am not familiar with and started wandering around the mansion.

This was to find out the chivalrous thief's infiltration path and target.

I observed the exterior of the mansion by putting myself in the shoes of the chivalrous thief.

Ara, the windows of the kitchen on the first floor was a little worn out.

Alderp was probably stingy about the repairs fees and only reinforced the broken window amateurishly by nailing it down.

Yup, if it was me, I would sneak in from here.

I returned to the kitchen and imagined what I would do if I was the thief that broke in through the window.

I would probably do it late at night.

The corridor would be pitch dark then.

The only ones who could learn 'farsight' that enables night vision would be those with archers or adventurers jobs.

Hence, the thief would only be able to move slowly in the dark by keeping to the wall...

While simulating the action of the thief and moving in, I came to a quiet room.

It might look like a room that had nothing in it, but if I was the thief, I would still go in and check it out.

I opened the door while thinking that...

"Hm? What, it's just you. What is it, there is nothing here alright? Don't wander around the villa like that."

For some reasons, Alderp was here.

Just like what Alderp said, this room had nothing except a large mirror on the wall.

But what is this old man doing in such a room?

As I wondered suspiciously, I realized that Alderp was cleaning this room from the bucket and towel in his hands.

He was cleaning it personally even though he had servants...?

I thought it was strange, and then a figure appeared on the giant mirror hanging on the wall.

That was...

“Huh? What is this mirror, a magic item? Like a magic mirror?”

A maid working in this mansion appeared on the mirror.

She seemed to be cleaning the shower room next door.

Although I could see the maid, she didn't seem to notice me.

... Hey.

“Old man, are you here to clean this mirror?”

When he heard that, Alderp averted his face aside and said softly: “... Want, want to watch together...?”

“There is no way I could accept such an invitation. Really, you bought this mirror because Darkness is staying here? I could empathize with you as a man, but... Keeping this room a secret from my comrades is the best I can do. But in exchange, I will be staying in this room during our time here alright? I need to stay here as a safety measure. Get out of here, hurry.”

When he saw me chasing him off with a wave, Alderp drooped his shoulders sadly and walked out...

And suddenly stopped.

“Wait. You want this room, that means...”

“Hey, stop your baseless speculations! Don't think that I will act the same way as you! I am just staying here to protect my comrades!”

“Then you don't even need to stay in this room, you just need to keep an eye on me when your comrades enter the bath! You get out of here too! How can I let a brat like you see Lalatina's naked body!”

“Too bad, I already bathed together with Darkness! That aside, I don't want to waste my precious time watching over an old man! Not just Darkness, do you want me to tell all the maids that there is such a room!? This is a win-win deal, shut up obediently if you don't want to be hated by all the woman living in this mansion!”

“Tell the maids all you want! I paid them a good salary, and being sexually harassed is part of the maid's job! But they look amazing when they are stripped, alright? Aren't you interested? ...How about it, want to make a deal with me? For some reason, I smell the scent of a comrade from you. In such a situation, shouldn't we guys compromise and work together for our happiness?”

“... A-are they that amazing?”

“Of course, they are really amazing.”

.....

I reached out my hand quietly, and when Alderp was about to shake my hand...

“What an interesting topic. Pray tell what is so amazing.”

At that moment, a familiar voice came from the door. Both of us withdrew our hands in a panic.

Before we even confirm the identity of that person, Alderp and I pointed at each other.

“This guy is planning to peek...!” x2

The magic mirror was smashed.

— Three days after we moved into the villa as guards.

The thief had yet to show up so far, and we lived a peaceful life just like we did in Axel Town.

Since they came to the capital, Aqua and Darkness had been going out frequently and I basically don't see them around.

Aqua said she wanted to chase out the church of Eris that had been throwing their weight around the royal capital and had been performing mischief in the name of preaching her cult.

Darkness received plenty of invitations from the nobles in the capital and had to socialize with them.

In the meantime, I—

“Oh, morning Kazuma. Although it is already noon.”

I came to the dining hall after waking up and saw Megumin who was having lunch there.

“I got up late intentionally to keep watch against thieves breaking in. I am not living a depraved life... And didn't you stay up late every night when I wasn't around?”

“!? W-well, I did do that! But I still got up early! Instead of that, any sign of the thief!?”

Megumin who was panicking more than usual said with the bread she had bitten into in her hands.

What the hell, this was like a love comedy.

“Why are you panicking? Are you really worried about me just like what Darkness said? Isn't that really cute?”

I teased her with a devious smile, and Megumin said with a blushing face: “... O-of course I will worry. Kazuma is really weak after all, and always gets dragged into trouble. And unlike the protagonist in stories, you won't be saved in the nick of time during a crisis, and might die at any moment.”

“I-I don't want to be dragged into trouble either, and I didn't die because I want to! Hey, don't do that, I won't know what to do even if you put on a serious face to lecture me!”

When she saw how I was panicking because of her response, Megumin chuckled.

“Despite that, you attempted to do things to me back in my village. Kazuma, you are unexpectedly cute.”

As she said that, she smiled mischievously as if she was taking revenge on me for teasing her.

Damn it, she didn't have any experience with love either, why was I at such a disadvantage?

And just what was with our relationship?

Just what did Megumin mean when she said she likes me?

If I interpret it literally and said ‘I like you too’, she will definitely reply ‘I don’t mean it that way, I like you as a friend...’

Such cliché development could be seen in mangas and light novels anywhere in Japan, the readers would feel anxious thinking ‘the feeling is mutual between the two of them, just get together already’.

However, when you were the one in their position, it was hard to do so.

You would be afraid of damaging the good relations the two of you had and hesitate about taking the next step.

In the end, what did I like about this girl?

Boys were naive in during their youth.

Just holding hands or seeing some actions you like would make you conscious of a girl and fall for her.

Megumin finished her meal while I was thinking about all that.

“Kazuma, want to go on a date with me after you finish your breakfast?”

She said nonchalantly to me with a smile.

— Megumin’s voice echoed through the open hills of the capital.

“Explosion—!!”

I knew it would turn out this way!

After being invited to a ‘*date*’, I came to the outskirt of the capital in search of a place to cast explosion with Megumin.

“Look, that explosion just now! Be it destructive power or effective range, it is really mighty today, super strong!”

“Alright alright, explosion spells are amazing. Hey, don’t fidget so excitedly, it’s hard to piggyback you this way!”

“Even if you say that, I couldn’t see the boulder being pulverised before I...!”

After she came back from the Home of the Crimson Magic, Megumin’s passion for explosion reached new heights.

Now that her explosion had been strengthened with all her accumulated skill points, the magic power of this Loli was catastrophic for humans.

For the residents of Axel Town, the daily explosion boom was a part of the town’s scene, and no one was bothered by it anymore.

But that wasn’t the case for the capital, it seemed that people had been complaining to Alderp.

Even though she only came to the capital for just a few days, Megumin was already known throughout the city.

After I tweaked Megumin's adventurer card in the Home of the Crimson Magic, the troubles that had been weighing her down was all gone and she didn't know how to hold back.

Why did I do that in the Home of the Crimson Magic?

I muttered to myself with Megumin on my back.

"I should have made you learn advanced magic..."

"Did you say something I can't just ignore!? Kazuma's words and actions moved me so much back then!"

I fended off the grumbling Megumin on my back as we headed back to Alderp's mansion.

— A week after we stayed in the mansion.

There were still no sign of the chivalrous thief.

"Hey! Don't look down on the goddess of water, you can't hide matters related to wine from me! Aren't there high class wine in the study room!? Hurry up and bring it here!"

During this week, Aqua drank all the wine Alderp had in his collection dry.

"... And then, my explosion burst out! I pity the fool, demon king army boss Hans who was turned into dust! Next, I will tell you what I did during the fight with the demon king army boss Sylvia..."

Not just the servants in the mansion, Megumin didn't let Alderp off either, and talked about her heroic exploits to whoever she nabbed.

And—

"Maid-san, Maid-san! Please give me the usual massage! Ah, I want to eat white beef sukiyaki for dinner tonight. Also, when the king size bed and soft and fluffy duvet I ordered arrive, please send it to my room!"

I made myself right at home here.

Recently, everyone had been lazing around together at the reception room.

If I couldn't go back to the castle, it might be great to keep being a bother here.

... Alderp who seemed to have gotten thinner these few days looked at us and said in a soft, tired voice.

"Lady Dustiness..."

When she heard him, Darkness who was curled up like a ball in a corner of the room shivered.

"Erm, although I did say you can stay as long as you wish..."

"You don't need to say anymore! We will move out right away!"

Darkness lowered her face shamefully on the verge of tears.

Part 3

— Midnight, when most of the world was asleep.

"Oh no... I thought this mansion would definitely be targeted..."

At the same time, it was the period when the undead and NEETs were the most active.

I couldn't sleep because I slept too much in the day, and headed towards the kitchen because I was hungry.

But this would be difficult.

What the hell, why wasn't the notorious Alderp with such a terrible reputation burgled?

If this went on, my plans to catch the chivalrous thief and return to the castle would...

The ambush would end right here when I leave the mansion tomorrow.

Did he saw through my ambush here?

And shouldn't my luck be great?

Speaking of which, I heard Eris-sama was the goddess of fortune.

Maybe Eris-sama was taking revenge on me who bullied Darkness too much, since she was a devoted Eris believer?

Or maybe that chivalrous thief's luck was better than mine...

When I reached the kitchen, I sensed that someone was here before me.

I could sense a presence, but the light in the kitchen wasn't on.

In that case, the one who would be there at such an hour would be—

... Aqua who had better night vision than me and had a similar life cycle like I do.

If it was that girl, she was probably here for snacks to go with her wine.

I was about to call out to her...

"To not have a single sentry, am I overthinking this? To think that I had been avoiding this villa because I had a bad feeling about this place..."

I heard a soft mumbling in the darkness.

The day before leaving the mansion, I finally hit the jackpot.

Thank you very much, goddess of fortune Eris-sama!

"...? I sensed a weird presence just now..."

Ara, no good. The opponent was the chivalrous thief, he definitely had the job of a thief.

He might had detected me by using sense enemy.

I activated my hide skill unconsciously, stick close to a wall in the darkness and remained still.

"Just my imagination...?"

With the soft mumble, the infiltrator started groping around in the dark.

From the way he was moving, he didn't seem to have night vision.

I followed behind the infiltrator and noticed something after closing the distance.

“Well then, ‘detect treasure’... Good. Hmm, so it's this way...”

The infiltrator who kept mumbling was—

“Caught you—!”

“!?”

I felt a soft sensation when I grabbed the infiltrator.

That's right, the thief was a woman.

“— Okay, keep still! Wahaha, the thief disrupting the peace in the capital, you picked the wrong opponent! You might be able to get by those mediocre people, but don't even think you can escape from me who had fought the bosses of the demon king army directly!”

“Stop!? Wait—!? This voice, could it be...!”

...?

What was going on? I felt that I heard the thief's voice somewhere before.

“Is it Kazuma-kun!? By the way, wait— Hey, you are grabbing a strange place!”

“No, I am just catching a burglar... Hmm, are you...”

I couldn't see the face with my night vision, but I realized the identity of the infiltrator.

“It's me! I am Darkness' good friend, I even taught you a skill before...!”

She was Chris who had concealed her mouth with a cloth.

Part 4

It's a pity, but I let go of Chris' hands.

Using the lighter I got from Wiz's shop, I lit a light in the darkness that revealed Chris who was holding her own body tightly with tears in her eyes.

“Ughhh... I had been violated... I can't marry anymore...”

“It couldn't be helped, I thought you were a thief. I don't have a skill to capture a target. Even if you take this to court, I am confident I will win the suit.”

“I will teach you the convenient ‘bind’ skill next time...”

I observed the sobbing Chris once again.

Chris wore tight black pants and shirt, and even covered her mouth with a black cloth.

She broke in wearing such an attire, which meant...

“So Chris is the rumoured chivalrous thief huh.”

“That’s right. By the way, what are you doing here?”

After hearing my explanation, Chris’ expression stiffened.

“D-Darkness is here!? Oh no, oh no, she will be mad if she knew I am doing this!”

“It can’t be helped. Even though you are a chivalrous thief, what you are doing is still a crime. Anyway, Darkness will be on your side. If you apologize properly, you won’t lose your life at the very least. You do the crime, you pay the time.”

“Wait! You got it wrong, there is a reason for this!”

Although Chris was saying that desperately, my hands were tied too.

What I needed now was merits.

And since she was Darkness’ friend, she won’t be executed so easily.

The money stolen from the nobles were gotten through dirty means, so it would be hard to pass judgement officially.

I feel that things could be resolved under the table by using this fact.

While I was thinking that, I heard sound of people rushing over.

We made too much of a ruckus.

At this moment, Chris who had resigned herself to her fate and was sitting down on the floor meekly raised her head.

“It can’t be helped, I will tell you the truth. Darkness will understand and help me after she hears me out.”

When I saw her determined expression, I had an ominous feeling.

That’s right, this development was—

“Actually, there is a reason why I had been burgling the nobles’ houses. That is…”

I was about to be dragged into trouble again, the same development as usual!

“Wait, stop, I don’t want to hear it! And don’t tell Darkness either!”

Chris tilted her head confusedly as I stopped her in a panic.

It would be troublesome for me if she did inform Darkness.

If the stubborn Darkness knew something big was happening, she definitely wouldn’t leave it alone.

I really want merits right now, but doing so safely with minimum risk took precedence.

After I was dragged into trouble numerous times, my instincts told me terrible things would happen if this went on.

“Hmm? B-but...”

“Don’t! Get out of here before someone else comes, I will let you go!”

I pushed Chris to the kitchen as I told her that.

“No, no, erm... Like I said, I need your help for something...”

“I don’t want to hear it! And have you thought it through!? The one rushing here is the notorious landlord known for his lechery! If he saw the captured Chris, he would...”

“I-I will retreat for now! I will find you next time to discuss that matter!”

“You don’t need to! Ah, bind me before you go! That would give me an excuse for letting the thief go!”

“I-I got it! I’m off then! ‘Bind’!”

Chris grabbed a rope and shouted, and my body was bounded just like that.

She then dashed out and disappeared into the night through the window.

“— Kazuma, are you alright!?”

The first one to reach was Darkness who was holding a lantern.

Aqua and Megumin were right behind her.

“This is...! Kazuma, you got hit by a ‘bind’!” Where did the thief that broke in go!?

“Regrettably, I let him slip away just inches from capturing him! I was too careless...!”

I roared in frustration in my bounds.

“He escaped... But that can’t be helped. After all, the opponent infiltrated the heavily guarded residence of nobles repeatedly. Instead of that, are you hurt? What kind of person was the thief?”

Darkness squatted down beside me and tried her best to undo the ropes. However, she didn’t succeed as the bind was done by a skill.

“The thief is a masked man wearing a strange mask. He is incredibly strong, probably stronger than a boss of the demon king army.”

“H-he is that strong!?”

Megumin shouted when she heard that.

At this moment, Aqua who had been quiet all this while moved to my side in a hurry.

“... Kazuma, seeing how you are tied up like a bagworm, you can’t move right?”

She squatted besides me and asked.

“It’s obvious right? I was just one step from subduing him, but I took a hit from his bind skill when my guard was down. Oh, your magic can dispel this right? Your magic can undo things like barrier correct?”

“Who do you think I am? Of course I can dispel this.”

Aqua said with a chuckle.

“As expected of Aqua, so dependable during critical moments! Free me please, it’s uncomfortable like this.”

I had a bad feeling about this and plead with Aqua with a friendlier tone than normal.

“Nee~, Kazuma. This is probably not the time for this, but I want to apologize to you for something.”

“... What, just tell me.”

A really bad feeling.

“Do you know? Because you didn’t come back for a long time, I ransacked your room to kill some time. And then, I broke the figurine you were making when I played with it.”

What did this bitch do to the merchandise I wanted to sell, I want to beat her up after my bounds are undone.

But the situation was to my disadvantage right now, so there was no other way.

“That, that is fine, I can just make another one. I won’t mind since you apologized so frankly. Instead of that, my bounds...”

“You forgave me? Well then, I will say the rest too! Actually, I thought that no one was using the room anyway and drank in Kazuma’s room. You know, isn’t it a hassle to clean up the bottles and snacks if you drink in your own room? And so, I broke some other things when I got drunk.”

Aqua said casually with a insincere apologetic expression.

“I am sorry♥!”



I really felt like slapping her onto the ground.

From the way she was apologizing when I couldn't move, she was doing this on purpose.

However, I don't know what she would do to the immobile me if I lose my temper and lash out at her.

"I-it's okay, Aqua and I are great friends right? It is also my fault for not going back! So instead of that, hurry and do something about this bounds..."

At this moment, Darkness and Megumin shoved Aqua aside.

"Yo. I just realized...!"

"This is a really joyous situation!"

Their expression illuminated by the lantern's light were twisted in an evil smile.

— Alderp who heard the commotion rushed into the dim kitchen with his guards.

"What's going on! Did that thief broke in... W-what happened here!?"

And he froze after seeing my pitiful sight.

I screamed when I saw Alderp: "Save me!"

Darkness looked down at me and said happily from the bottom of her heart: "Not '*save me*'! Say it! Say '*I am very sorry for being so arrogant lately*'! Say '*I deeply regret troubling you all the time*'! Say '*I apologize humbly for shaming you*'!!"

"I am sorry! Sorry for troubling you! Sorry for shaming you!!"

"I want to hear Kazuma say that line again! Quick, say that cool line from that time again! How many points? How many points is my explosion?"

"Don't do that! The feeling is only there if you say such lines once! Don't make me say it so many times, I will feel really embarrassed!"

"Come on, say it quick! Hurry up, don't be shy!"

"Wahaha, it's great to reverse the role every now and then! Next will be...!"

I cried at the man I despised deeply: "Alderp-sama!!"

Part 5

— The next morning.

We came to the castle to report yesterday's incident.

This was the deepest part of the castle known as the audience hall.

"I see. Despite your confidence in apprehending the thief, you failed."

Claire said sarcastically to me.

As the stand in for the King who was away on an expedition, she sat on the throne that was in the deepest part of the audience hall.

I couldn't tell them that the chivalrous thief was an adventurer I knew, so I gave a fake account of how the thief looked.

And so, the thief was a strong bandit wearing a strange mask.

"No, it wasn't a complete failure! If not for me, all the treasures from old man Alderp's house would have been stolen!"

This caused an uproar among the nobles.

The content of their whispers were 'he is no big deal after all'.

"... Hmm, let's say that is true. Since this is Kazuma-dono who fought with the bosses of the demon king army, we won't need to use the magic items that detect lies. That's right, seems like that chivalrous thief is a hard opponent to beat."

This woman was definitely doubting my words.

When she heard Claire's belittling words, the atmosphere around Megumin who was behind me changed.

Darkness panically restrained Megumin who was planning to do something, and Iris stood up from her throne at this moment.

"Erm... No matter what, thank you for your hard work! This wasn't a failure in capturing the chivalrous thief, but a success in preventing his theft. No one has the right to blame you!"

She clenched her fists and said with a blushed face...

While I was feeling moved by Iris' speech, Claire said with a bitter expression.

"The generous Princess Iris have spoken. You uttered such boastful words before so many nobles but failed, normally, you should be punished. Be grateful to Her Highness Iris for her mercifulness... Since you failed to capture the thief, there is no reason for you to linger in the castle, leave at once!"

— On my way out of the audience hall, the maids and butlers showed a cold attitude towards me.

They seemed to have learned of my failure.

News of me not being a big deal had spread.

"Sigh, don't be bothered by this incident. You have done well. Like Princess Iris said, it is true that you stopped the criminal. But we will be going back alright? No one will ask you to work for a while back in town. Aren't you going to get a huge sum of money from that fellow Vanir soon? I think you should relax for a while."

"Kazuma, you've played enough right? Let's go back to Axel Town. Even if you don't stay in the castle, isn't lazing around at home in Axel fine too?"

Darkness and Megumin consoled me.

... I wasn't that insistent about being a hikkikomori in the castle.

However, despite being a twelve year old kid, Iris who wasn't wilful and had been holding back—

I was just concerned about Iris who had to spend her days lonely in the castle that had no virtue other than being large and vast.

... But for me who had a large difference in status and had no important business here, what could I do for that child...

Regrettably, I couldn't think of any feasible methods.

Looking back at the imposing castle behind, I could feel my powerlessness acutely and sighed.

"... Let's return first..."

When they heard what I said, Darkness and Megumin showed a relieved expression.

"Nee~, Kazuma, can we go back tomorrow? It's a rare chance for us to come here, I want to buy some souvenirs back. The capital has plenty of good wine. Nee~, you are very free right? Accompany me to go shopping."

Aqua who couldn't read the mood as usual said suddenly.

Part 6

"The wine in the capital isn't as great as the rumours made it to be. Compared to their standard, the ones in old man Mike's shop back in Axel Town is better."

"Who is this old man Mike? And the acquaintances you know in the town is increasing. The butcher even delivered high quality meat to the mansion some time ago, he said it was a gift for healing him."

I was forced to shop with Aqua in the capital due to her wilfulness.

Darkness and Megumin went to search for the inn we would be staying in for tonight.

I really wish this bumbling girl could learn from Iris who was always careful not to trouble others.

"Hey, this is the first time I heard this. I don't remember receiving any meat from you."

"You and Megumin were out at that time. Because we hadn't had lunch, I asked Darkness to cook it and the two of us finished it off."

I fended off Aqua as the two of us pushed against each other with our hands clasped.

"Ara? What a coincidence to run into Aqua-sama here!"

Someone called us from behind.

The one standing there was the sword master who uses a magic sword.

It had been a long time since I met this strange fellow...

I remember his name was Maturagi, a man who came from Japan just like I did.

He always brought two girls along with him, but seemed to be alone today.

Aqua said suspiciously: "... W-who are you?"

She was the one who sent him here, but she seemed to have forgotten.

When Katsuragi heard what she said, he smiled happily.

“Aqua-sama, you like to joke as usual.”

However, Aqua hid behind me instinctively.

“Nee~, Kazuma, who is this person? He is acting familiar...” She whispered.

“Erm, it’s me? The person you bestowed a magic sword to, and was chosen to save this word. The sword master...”

“This is Katsuragi-san. We met him before, remember?”

“W-who is that! I am Mitsurugi! Can you at least remember my family name!?”

Mitsurugi roared at me with veins popping up on his head.

Aqua didn’t seemed to remember after hearing his name.

Even though we did meet during the battle with Destroyer.

“You can’t remember just by the name Mitsurugi? The one who uses the magic sword?”

Her memory was probably jolted by my words, and Aqua clapped her hands together.

Mitsurugi finally realized that Aqua wasn’t joking and really had forgotten.

“... Why. Hey, Satou Kazuma... Did you really remember my name wrongly? To confirm this, can you say my given name?”

“We are not so close that we address each other on a first name basis.”

“I am Kyoya! Just say it honestly if you can’t remember! Mitsurugi Kyoya, remember that!”

Mitsurugi who raised his voice placed a hand on his temple and shook his head.

He finally calmed down and said after exhaling.

“... Really, seems like we need to determine who is stronger. My abilities have risen since that time, I won’t lose shamefully now! Come, let’s—”

“What the hell are you talking about? We already had a match, and I won. And I won’t accept any more challenges. So let me retain my record of winning against you as a rookie adventurer.”

“... You are...”

Mitsurugi’s expression seemed a bit lonely, but I had no chance of winning if I fought someone with a high tier job possessing a magic sword head on.

Mitsurugi sighed.

“... Never mind. Instead of that— It’s good that we met here. I have something to tell both of you.”

He said so seriously.

— Aqua and I sat opposite Mitsurugi in a cafe in the city.

“Alright, back to topic... So, before that, I have something for Aqua-sama.”

Mitsurugi took something out as he said that.

It was a small box that had been wrapped beautifully.

... Oh?

Mitsurugi offered it before Aqua who was concentrating on folding a napkin and said: “Aqua-sama, from what I see, you don’t normally wear jewelry right? You are charming even if you don’t wear it... But if it pleases you, please take this...”

He even said such a cliché line.

I was certain that this guy was a normal fag back in Japan too.

“...? What? A present for me?”

“Yes, please accept it. It is not expensive, so I am not sure if it would fit Aqua-sama’s taste...”

Mitsurugi replied with a refreshing smile.

He was really a handsome guy. Which irked me.

“What happened to your two minions? Is it fine for you to flirt in such a place?”

“They are not minions, they are my important comrades! They are grinding their levels in the neighbouring country. Because if we are together, I will always be the one that defeats the most enemies. That’s why I am staying here to fend off the demon king army that would attack occasionally.”

Aqua ignored our conversation and opened the box, taking out a tiny ring from within.

No matter how I looked at it, it was a high class ring that didn’t look cheap.

Although he humbly mentioned that it was cheap, he definitely spent a lot on this.

But, did he know Aqua’s ring size?

Just when I was wondering about that.

“...? The ring is too small, it won’t fit.”

Aqua gave up quickly after trying it on her fingers.

Mitsurugi said with a wry smile.

“This is enchanted with magic, you can adjust the size here...”

When he was about to say something.

“Kazuma, Kazuma, look here quick.”

Aqua said as she covered the ring with a napkin.

“Ding ding.”

She pulled the napkin away with that sound effect.

And so, the ring that was there disappeared without a trace.

“... Amazing. This is amazing, but where did the ring go?”

Aqua replied to me: “...? It has vanished, even I don’t know where it had gone.”

“Huh?”

Mitsurugi made a stunned sound.

... I felt a bit sorry for him.

“Even though it was a cheap item that didn’t fit, it could be used in a performance. Thank you~”

Mitsurugi was speechless when he saw Aqua’s innocent smile.

“No, no need...! I am happy to be of help for Aqua-sama’s performance.”

Mitsurugi laughed dryly as he said that.

... My condolences.

— Aqua continued humming as she folded her napkin as if nothing had happened.

After Mitsurugi watched Aqua with gentle eyes, he turned to me. “I will get to the point. This is something that concerns you too.”

This was the summary of what Mitsurugi said.

According to him, the first demon army king boss was dispatched to Axel Town was because the prophet in the castle of the demon king said that a bright light had descended there.

The demon king wasn’t very convinced when he dispatched Beldia.

Beldia was then defeated, and Vanir who was sent next went missing in action.

Even Sylvia who was attacking the Home of the Crimson Magic recently was subjugated.

There was a rumour circulating among the demon king army that all these incidents were done by a certain adventurer team.

And now, the demon king had turned his attention towards this adventurer team.

He might attack Axel Town which the team was using as a base, or send more minions over.

... Hey, was that team referring to us?

“But, the bright light descending on Axel Town is...”

I unconsciously turned to look at Aqua who was making something.

Mitsurugi's gaze turned to her right after.

"... I think that was referring to Aqua-sama too. I thought in the beginning that the bright light the demon king was wary about is me... D-don't look at me like that..." Mitsurugi noticed that my gaze seemed to be implying '*Ughh... what is with this laughable narcissist*', and frowned unhappily.

At this moment, Aqua said to Mitsurugi—

"It's done. For you, a gift for the ring. The theme of this work is goddess Eris transforming combination robot. The chest armour is detachable, and there are three forms it could change into."

Aqua said something weird as she presented her folded napkin.

Mitsurugi took it from Aqua with a wry smile.

"Haha, thank you Aqua-sama. I will carefully keep..."

He said while receiving the napkin with a smile.

Mitsurugi and I glanced at it for a moment.

"“Amazing!” x2

The folded napkin that gave the impression of Eris-sama was beyond the realm of paper folding and was a piece of art.

"... Hey Aqua, make one for me too."

"Don't wanna, I won't make the same thing again. A mobile suit Jack Frost would be fine though."

"M-make that one then."

After taking my request, Aqua started folding the napkin silently.

Mitsurugi stood up with a smile when he saw that.

"Satou Kazuma. Before I become stronger, please protect Aqua-sama... Well then, Goddess-sama, I will excuse myself. I will treasure this paper folding."

When Aqua heard what Mitsurugi said, she raised her head with a "hmm?"

"...? Ah, goodbye... Say, Kazuma, is transforming necessary?"

"It's necessary, please do the usual."

Mitsurugi looked at the both of us with a slightly lonely expression.

"You and Aqua-sama really get along well with each other."

After saying that, he bided farewell and left.

— On the way back to the inn.

"By the way, it's been a long time since I was addressed as Goddess-sama. That Katsuragi person might be a good guy after all."

If you really think that, you should remember his name first.

Although I was partly at fault for calling him Katsuragi in the beginning.

I pondered while watching Aqua who was saying that cheerfully.

The demon king was cautious about this ‘thing’?

... No, that’s not possible.

Yup, impossible.

“By the way, what’s for dinner? Compared to Axel Town, the capital is a battle ground, so large amounts of meat from powerful monsters could be gotten here. Bringing ingredients to the restaurants in the capital seemed to be the common sense here. I heard that we can request the staff at the inn to use our ingredients to cook delicious dishes that gives plenty of experience points... I feel like eating something heavy today. Let’s get some high class meat for the inn to grill them for us.”

“I want to eat something light. I want to eat something together with vegetables that goes with wine.”

Although Mitsurugi said that I got along with Aqua, our opinions clashed immediately.

“Let’s have a match then. Thanks to Mitsurugi, I remembered that you are actually a goddess. I will give you a special handicap then. If you can win once against me in three rounds of rock paper scissors, I will make the dish you like.”

“Hmm? What? You are really confident, Kazuma. In that case, you might as well just listen to me straight. Let’s go! Rock scissors...!”

Together with the goddess who completely forgot how strong I was in a game of chance and lacked the ability to learn, I returned to the inn together with high quality meat.

Part 7

— That night.

I woke up from my slumber in the hotel when I detected someone’s presence.

“... Get up... Hey, get up quick.”

In the darkness, a figure was looking at me as she whispered in a familiar voice.

“Tch!”

“Waahhhh! Wait, it’s me! Nee~, I’m Chris! Stop! Where are you touching, stop! Darkness! Darkness, save me ahhhh!”



After grabbing the intruder, I realized she was Chris.

“What, so it’s Chris. Hey, since you barged in so late at night, you have something you can’t let anyone else know right? Even so, why are you calling out to Darkness for help?”

“You, you jerk! Didn’t you grabbed me after confirming that it’s me!? You wouldn’t need to touch that place if you want to subdue someone right!?”

Chris was panting hard in the darkness.

I thought Darkness would rush over after hearing that scream, but no one showed any signs of waking up.

“Really, I can’t let my guard down at all... It’s really regrettable that you are the only one I could ask.”

“You came all this way to night raid a guy’s room, so why are you shouting after I touched you a little? Is this some kind of badger game!?”

“This is not a night raid! Nor a badger game!! I already told you that I would explain the reason for breaking into that mansion later! Ah, wait! Hey you, don’t pretend you didn’t hear that!!”

Chris pulled at me as I attempt to hide inside my blanket with my hands over my ears.

“Didn’t I tell you I don’t want to listen to your circumstances when we were in Alderp’s mansion!? My mood is terrible right now after parting with the Princess! Tell me next time! Specifically speaking, some time next year!”

“Why can’t I tell you now! Listen to me! There is a good reason why I broke into the homes of the nobles...!”

Chris explained to me as I continued to resist and hide in my blanket—

In this world, there were powerful equipment and magic items known as divine relics.

They were called divine relics after all, so it was not easy to obtain.

However, all the possessor of these relics had one similarity.

They all had black hair, black eyes and weird names.

“This means, normally only people with weird names like you would be able to get these items known as divine relic.”

“Don’t tell me my name is weird. As if I’m from the Crimson Magic Clan.”

My resistance didn’t work, and I heard a weird explanation from Chris as she peeled my blanket off me.

Aqua explained these divine relics to me a long time ago.

It meant those cheat like item from the ‘power you can obtain catalogue’ I was shown before coming to this world.

“However, I don’t how it came to be, but two of these lost divine relic have been bought by a certain noble.”

“Oh.”

Simply put, if the owner of the divine relic dies, it would be left behind in this world.

One of them was an item that could summon and command monsters without needing to pay any price.

The other divine relic seemed to be able to exchange the user's body with someone else.

Being able to summon and command monsters seemed powerful and easy to understand, but what was the person who asked for the body swapping relic thinking?

With no regards for my doubts, Chris sat on the bed with her legs swinging off the edge and said: "Among my thieving skills, there is one that could sense the location of treasures, known as 'detect treasure'. And so, I used that skill to search each of the noble houses in the capital."

"You mean only notorious nobles with more money than they could ever spend would collect those rare treasures huh."

"That's right! But I couldn't find the relics even after I infiltrated in. I had always wanted to do something thief like, so I swiped some of their ill gotten money when I was in!"

So this girl only became a chivalrous thief at the spur of the moment.

"After that, I sensed a powerful treasure from the mansion you were residing in and snuck in."

"I see. Yup, I understand why you infiltrated in. But I still don't understand why you are collecting the divine relics."

When she heard what I said, Chris scratched the scar on her cheeks and looked a little troubled.

"The reason I'm collecting the divine relics... Eh, I just might tell you when the time comes? ... And so, did you see any strange treasures in the mansion? Did the old man called Alderp used any magic item that seemed really powerful?"

"Aside from the magic mirror he installed in the bathroom, there wasn't any special magic items... By the way, might the powerful treasure you sensed be Aqua's hagoromo? She had been boasting that her hagoromo was a divine relic or something since the beginning."

When she heard what I said, Chris lowered her head depressedly.

"A-alright, it's fine then... And so, there is a reason why I snuck in here."

See, it's here!

"Shut up, I don't want to be dragged into troubles! And this feels like a really terrible matter!"

"Ah, hey! Don't be such a bother and listen to me! Actually, I could sense a powerful treasure in the castle's direction. And it is the same level as the one I felt in the villa, the presence of a powerful treasure!"

"... I think it is naturally for powerful treasures to be inside the castle... And so?"

"Well, I remember you have the night vision skill 'farsight'! I also taught you 'hide' and 'detect enemy'! Using these skills, you can sneak in together with me..."

"Don't attempt to make me your partner in crime! I had a bad feeling about this since you told me you wanted to discuss something with me in Alderp's villa, why would I help you!"

"Nee~, don't reject me so fast, hear me out properly! It would be terrible if I don't recover these two divine relics!"

“Ask someone who is more hero-like than me for such an important thing! Right, there is a guy in this city called Mitsurugi! If it’s that guy, you just need to tell him ‘the world will fall into chaos if the lost divine relics falls into the wrong hands...!’ Just incite him a little and he will definitely help you!”

“So cold! I just want you to be the one to help me! Enough, I am going to wake Darkness and ask her!”

“Hey stop! Darkness is a noble, if Chris’ real identity is revealed to the nobles, she would be placed in a bad situation!”

“But, but...!”

“Alright, hurry up and go home, go home! If you don’t go, I will use the bind skill I learned after you it cast on me to tie you up and sexually harass you! I suffered so much because of that yesterday!”

“Wait!? I-I understand, I will withdraw for today! I will discuss this with you tomorrow!”

“I already told you not to come here! Bi...”

“I-I will be going now!”

After opening the window, the shrieking Chris jumped out and disappeared into the city that was on the verge of dawn.

Really, she wanted to give me even more trouble, just spare me.

Honestly speaking, where did my supposed good luck went?

The goddess of fortune Eris-sama, I will convert to the church of Eris after returning to Axel Town if you grant me with peace.

I prayed as I hid into the blanket...

— After that, the alarm woke me up as if it was waiting for this moment.

Gifting the Stay-at-home Princess with Bad Friends!

Part 1

“Demon King Army raid alert! Demon King Army raid alert! We detected a Demon King Army group forming up in the plains nearby! Knights Corps prepare to move out. Because of the massive scale of the attack, we are appealing for the adventurers within the capital to join in the battle! All high level adventurers, please gather urgently in front of the castle!”

The broadcast that echoed through the capital at dawn.

At the same time, the place that was quiet had started getting rowdy.

“Kazuma, you awake!? You heard the broadcast just now!? Get your gear ready!”

Along with Darkness’ frantic shouts, a knocking sound came from the door.

“I’m still sleeping.”

“Idiot, this is no time for jokes! The Demon King Army is here, we have to join in the fight too!”

I poked my head out of my blankets and answered to the door that was being knocked even harder.

“You are the one who’s kidding me! Listen to what’s being broadcasted, ‘*All high level adventurers, please gather urgently in front of the castle*’. I’m only level 17, I can’t even be considered a mid level adventurer. And there are skilled adventurers like Mitsurugi gathered in the capital right? Even without us, they can repel the Demon King Army easily.”

“Why, why you! Forget it, I will join the fray with Aqua and Megumin! Low level adventurers just need to hide in their beds and shiver!”

Darkness, who was rapping the door, walked away with loud angry steps.

Shortly after...

“Not going! Why must I go to such a dangerous place!? I came to the capital to play! And you want me to fight the Demon King Army? Definitely not going!”

“Aqua, stop squirming around! This is a battle against the Demon King Army, the more healers we have, the better! Just look at Megumin! See how pumped she is...!”

“Darkness, I won’t be going to the castle, I’ll go straight to the Demon King Army! If things turned chaotic after the battle, I won’t be able to use my spell! The first shot is mine! Or rather, just let me use my powered up magic to wipe out the Demon King Army in one go!”

“Wait, Megumin, don’t fool around! Aqua stop playing, let go of the bed! Really, Kazuma, I beg of you, please think of something!!”

How long were they going to be so noisy!

On top of that, I won’t be troubled by money woes once I return to Axel Town.

There was no benefit in risking my life in this battle...

“...!?”

I throw off the blanket and jump up.

Even if I took part in this battle, the remuneration wasn't attractive to me.

But, what if I achieved great merits in the battle...?

That's right, capturing the thief was a failure, but if I accomplish something prominent...!

Also, there were supposedly many adventurers with cheat-like powers such as Mitsurugi in the capital.

It was unlikely that we would lose, if I emphasized my presence during this battle and reached the status of the guardian of the royal capital, there might be a chance for me to stay in the castle.

There wasn't a need to act like a dynasty warrior against the Demon King Army.

I just needed to show off my efforts all over the battlefield.

“Don't force me Darkness, I have a bad feeling about this! This is the instinct of a goddess! The same feeling as the ice cream you bought dropping onto the floor, or all the lottery ticket you collected from a shop not winning! An accident will surely happen! So I beg of you, I will give you one of my sausages from breakfast, so see you tomorrow!”

“Let me go Darkness! *‘When the kingdom's soldiers reached the battlefield, they could only see the Demon King Army that had been utterly and mercilessly destroyed, as well as a mage leaving quietly...!’* I want to recreate this scene! This is my chance, let me go!”

“Kazuma! I can't do this alone, do something about these two!”

I opened the door fully armed and said to the noisy trio: “What are you lot doing, a crisis is upon us. Off we go! Now is our turn to take the field!”

“.....” x3

— When we reached the castle, a fully armed knight corps had already gathered and was standing in organized formations. There was a large group of adventurers too.

“Adventurers gather this way! There are no specific instructions for everyone! As you have not received training in military group maneuvers, you will be acting separately from the knight corps, so just fight freely! I will inspect everyone's adventurer card before the battle. We will provide additional rewards based on the number of monsters you subjugated after the battle, please do your best!”

It was probably one of the staff members from the guild in the capital that gave the instructions through a loudhailer type magic item.

We mustered at the designated area and a staff member requested for us to show our adventurer card.

After inspecting my card, the staff frowned a little uneasily and said with an apologetic face:

“Satou Kazuma-san right? I am sorry, but it is too dangerous to take part if you don't have a top tier job and you are below level 30, so we can't accept your participation. Please return and defend the city...”

“It’s fine. That man is a veteran adventurer who achieved plenty of merits.”

The one who interrupted the staff was Claire who made her way to us before I noticed.

Claire and a group of nobles probably came here to raise the morale of the knights and adventurers mustered before the castle.

And the nobles were looking at me with expectant eyes.

Despite the failure in apprehending the chivalrous thief, they were still looking forward to observe our prowess that defeated multiple bosses of the Demon King Army.

At this moment, I saw a figure looking down at us from the balcony in the castle.

On a closer look, it was Iris who was looking straight at me with eyes filled with expectations.

Without a doubt, this will spur my fighting spirit.

Leave it to me, Onii-chan will work hard!

... At this moment, someone tugged on my sleeve.

“Kazuma-san, Kazuma-san. I am very smart and have the ability to learn. I will definitely get into trouble if I take part. For example, a kid whose head was caught in the door when she was young might drag me into her explosion spell. Or someone whose brain is squashed by muscles might attract monsters and pull me into danger. Say, it’s not too late, why don’t we return to Axel Town?”

“Not just Aqua, I have the ability to learn too, so that kind of thing won’t happen!”

“Hey Aqua, can you not call me a muscle head? It feels as if the impression of me being the dumbest had been fixed...”

I faced the uneasy Aqua and showed a fearless smile.

“What, the opponents are just mobs that have numbers. It is about time for me to strut my stuff!”

“Oh!” x4

After I made my determined announcement, the nobles around me showed their face full of expectations.

Claire then faced the knights in neat formation and the gathered adventurers, and commanded loudly.

“— Demon King Army subjugation group, move out!”

Part 2

“... Hello. It’s been a while, Eris-sama.”

“.....”

When I came to, I was standing in the middle of a familiar shrine.

Just how many times had I died so far?

Killed by Jack Frost, snapped my neck falling down from a tree.

And...

“Sorry, I didn’t think that I would be killed by Kobolds at this level...”

I was mobbed and clobbered to death by Kobolds.

Kobolds.

That’s right, those kind of Kobolds.

Monsters that you grind to gain levels, and a synonym for mob monsters in this world—I was surrounded and bashed to death by them.

I looked at Eris who was silent before me.

“Let me explain, Eris-sama. Things were going well until the middle part. After receiving buffs from Aqua, I followed behind Darkness. The powerful monsters had been taken by the other adventurers, but I felt that I could kill more monsters than that bunch...”

“.....”

That’s right, things were going well in the beginning.

I kept drawing my bow as I hid behind Darkness, and kept accumulating kills.

It turned into a free for all battle shortly later. In order to save the wailing Aqua who had been bitten by the Kobolds—

“‘The likes of Kobolds are nothing’, ‘I have grown stronger too’ — With such thinking in mind, I charged forth to build on my victory...”

As I chased the weaker Kobolds all over the place because of my arrogance, I was deep inside enemy grounds before I realized it and was surrounded and mobbed by a huge group of Kobolds.

Oh no, it would be so embarrassing if I revive now.

I even made a declaration of victory before the fight, and now I got clobbered to death by Kobolds. I really felt like digging a hole and hiding in there.

Eris didn’t speak all this while, she definitely had no words for me.

“Er-erm, Eris-sama? I will reflect on dying so carelessly, can you please soothe your anger?”

I asked timidly and Eris replied with a blushed face.

“... Sexual harassment, is bad.”

She glared at me.

Cold sweat ran down my back.

Speaking of which, Eris could see what was happening in the mortal world.

I groped that thief girl so eagerly not too long ago, and she happened to be a devoted Eris believer.

Eris was probably angry about her important devotees being bullied.

“No, let me explain Eris-sama, it couldn’t be helped. When I first grabbed her, I thought she was a boy because her chest was too thin... No, I am really sorry, please forgive me, I won’t find any more excuses!”

Seeing Eris’ mood becoming worse, I got down on my knees and lowered my head in apology.

“... Really, your sexual harassment is really too much. I will only forgive you this one time, okay?”

Eris sighed and scratched her cheeks troublingly.

“Thank you for your magnanimity, Eris-sama! I was just thinking what I should do if the important orthodox main heroine Eris-sama was to detest me.”

“You are saying such things again... Aren’t you overjoyed because of your new sister?”

Just how much did you spy, Eris-sama.

While I was dumbfounded, Eris chuckled.

“I will stop my teasing here. Also, I have a request for you.”

“... Request for me?”

Eris nodded.

“The devoted who was sexually harassed by you last night already told you part of it right? The divine relic Aqua-sempai gave to the reincarnated people is circulating in the world.”

“Oh right, there’s that too. By the way, if I remember correctly, the divine relic will choose its owner right? I thought I could use that cheat-like magic sword when I took it, but I learned that it would just be a normal sword in the hands of others.”

That’s right, I thought I could use it when I stole that magic sword from Mitsurugi, but was informed of that instead.

“This explanation is correct... The divine relic will only display its full power in the hands of the one who had been bestowed with it. A powerful magic sword that can cut through anything will become a normal sword. A staff that can draw forth endless mana will become a normal staff that increases mana regeneration. Other such divine relics wouldn’t give much problem if they were misused...”

According to Eris, the two divine relics that were lost would affect the world greatly even if it couldn’t use its original power.

Firstly, the divine relic that could summon and command monsters without needing to pay the price. It will become a magic item that would require paying a price after summoning monsters.

The other was a divine relic that could exchange body with another person. The effect changed from being permanent to temporary.

A keyword needed to be said in order to use either of the divine relics, so they can’t be misused so easily even if they were lost in the world.

But there was still a one in a million chance.

If someone uttered the keyword and summoned a monster inside a city, it would be terrible.

If someone walking the dog switched body with his pet coincidentally, a new type of Kobold would come into existence.

“Hand the retrieved divine relic to Aqua-sempai to seal. There are no rewards or fame for this job. And you can’t bring up the divine relic to people you don’t trust. Since it is possible to for people other than the reincarnated person to use a toned down power of the divine relic, there might be people who might go after the life of all the reincarnated people.”

Eris held my hands seriously.

“Will you heed my request to collect the divine relics back?”

Part 3

— When I opened my eyes, I found Aqua looking at me with all smiles.

“Kazuma-san who died to the Kobolds, welcome back!”

I really felt like beating her up!

“Is that the first thing you say to someone who just revived!? Learn how to act like a goddess from Eris-sama!”

After lecturing Aqua, I looked around me. The battle was over.

“... Hey, this might sound conceited to the person who resuscitated me, but can’t you do it earlier, when there is a chance for me to redeem my honour?”

“Why should I revive someone who died to Kobolds? If you die again shortly after, it would be a hassle.”

I croaked that easily just now, so I couldn’t retort her.

“... Hey, I have one more thing to ask. Is that alcohol I smell on you? Did you took a swig of wine in the middle of battle?”

“Of course not. The wine was given to me by everyone after my exemplary performance in battle. While Kazuma was lying down as a corpse, everyone acted amazingly. I wish I could show you how big a contribution my ‘Turn Undead’ and healing spells were!

... I see.

That was why Aqua was showered by gaze full of respect and admiration from all around.

“Last question... Why is there something heavy tied on to me?”

“Well, Darkness said it would be troublesome if Kazuma’s corpse gets damaged in the battle, she asked me to throw you in a corner so you wouldn’t get in the way. But after Kazuma was dumped in a corner, there was a monster that attempted to drag you away...”

“Enough, I don’t want to hear the rest! I get it, you didn’t want me to be dragged off, that’s why you tied me down with something heavy! Thank you for your kindness! I have been thinking about this all this while, you guys really have no respect for the dead!”

After getting a grip on the situation, I checked my surroundings again.

The scale of the Demon King Army attack this time was rather large.

Even though a rookie like me can't grasp the numbers accurately, the subjugated monsters were easily over a thousand.

Despite that, there was no one with obvious injury, or any death.

"Aqua-san, thank you for your hard work in resuscitation. Here, this way please!"

"Ara, as expected of an arch priest, what splendid technique! You even mastered resurrection...!"

"Thanks to you, there are no casualties around here! Aqua-san, thank you very much!"

After Aqua revived me, several knights came to thank her.

I see, Aqua healed the injuries of all the wounded.

Her performance was unlike her usual wacky actions and speech.

"Kazuma, you have revived! Are you fine? Does it hurt anywhere?"

Darkness whose face and armour showed signs of being charred came over with several knights in tow.

From her tattered armour, she fought really hard.

"Lady Dustiness! That was a wondrous performance!"

"That's right, it was simply marvelous! Ara, the way Lady Dustiness took the spell with an easy expression, and the way she charged into the middle of the Demon King's Army was astonishing!"

"I won't forget the face of the Demon King commander when he saw the way you fought any time soon!"

"Thanks to Lady Dustiness drawing all the enemy's attention, there weren't any heavy injuries. You were a big help!"

The knights looking at Darkness with admiration kept on praising her.

I see. In such a large scale battle, Darkness' aggro must have been incredibly effective.

Darkness' attacks might be terrible, but her defence was the best in Axel.

I felt a bit vexed for missing the rare chance of seeing her putting on a show.

Speaking of which, where was Megumin?

... As I was searching for her, I found Megumin who was being carried like a fragile item on a stretcher approaching.

The knights leading the way for the stretcher chased off the crowd of adventurers who were peering curiously.

"Hey, the MVP of the battle is coming through, make way!"

"Great work, Megumin-san. Make way, you want to be blown away by an explosion spell!?"

"The top mage in Axel who returned everything into dust, Megumin-san is coming through! Make way!"

... What the hell.

Looking carefully, I could see a giant crater somewhere in the distance.

“When the battle became chaotic, Megumin was frustrated because she can’t use her spell. But the Demon King Army started to withdraw when things were going badly for them. In the end, the enemy commander said :”*This is just a prelude battle. One day, I will bring an army several times this size and grind the capital into dust!*” After that, when he was attempting to escape...”

Aqua looked at Megumin as she explained.

“Ara— that felt great, Megumin-san!”

“That’s right! That commander had been getting on my nerves since long ago! That bastard, dropping that type of speech and running whenever things get dangerous.”

“But this is wonderful! Casting the magic into the center of the retreating Demon King Army and saying ‘*I am Megumin! The number one arch wizard of Axel, user of explosion magic...! You are the one who will return to dust...!*’ Megumin-san was so cool that time!”

“That’s right, this is the best! To think that you can cast such a powerful spell by exhausting all your mana!”

Megumin was carried over as if she was on a pedestal, and she seemed to be enjoying this treatment.

“Isn’t that right! However, there is no way a small fry like that could stand before my ultimate technique. After all, I am the one who sent the Demon King Army boss into the other world, and even pulverized the legendary bounty target, the Destroyer!!”

Megumin got even cockier now that she was carried on a stretcher.

“So it’s true you took down the Destroyer!?”

“What a great arch wizard! Megumin-san, can you show me some magic other than explosion!?”

“Ohh, allow me to witness it too! I wish to learn the destructive power hidden behind Megumin-san’s advanced magic!”

“... Well, I do want to show it to you, but I already exhausted my mana. Such a shame...”

“Of course. It’s fine if you do so tomorrow too, Megumin-san!”

“Ara, I can’t wait for tomorrow morning!”

“I will tell the others too!”

“... W-well, erm, I might be busy tomorrow... Ah, Kazuma! Great, you have revived! It must be difficult for you after just reviving, so let me look after Kazuma tomorrow...”

... Megumin got into trouble because she let her cockiness get to her head, but it looked funny, so I let her be.

Part 4

“The knights and adventurers have returned victoriously—!”

Someone started it with a shout, and the capital erupted in cheers.

We were greeted by the exuberant crowd in the city when we returned to bring news of our triumph.

Some lowered their head in gratitude while others raised their arms in glee.

Seeing this scene, the knights and adventurers entered the castle proudly with their head held high.

After entering, I could see Iris and Claire leading a group of happy nobles waiting for us.

Claire was wearing white as usual walked in front of us.

“Dear Knights and adventurers! Thank you for your hard work! The capital is safe thanks to your exemplary performance! Her Highness Iris expressed her sincere gratitude on behalf of the Kingdom... Look forward to your bounty payment!”

The adventurers cheered excitedly when they heard that.

“Also! To reward everyone for their efforts, we are preparing a banquet. Everyone must be tired after the battle ended. Please rest until evening before coming back to the castle. We will then present a special reward for those with outstanding performance! That is all, thank you everyone!”

The cheers reached its crescendo, and the adventurers’ started getting excited. They acknowledged the cheers happily as they talk about how to kill time until evening and left.

“Lady Dustiness, pray tell us about the detail of the battle inside the castle...”

“I heard about your exploits in this battle...!”

“Right, I wish to learn about Lady Dustiness’ glamorous fight too!”

Darkness was surrounded by nobles and brought to the castle in a blink of an eye.

She looked towards me for help as she was being taken away, but as the man who was killed by Kobolds, I didn’t want to attract too much attention.

“Hey Kazuma. Before the party begins, I am going to preach to the people I healed and invite them to join the Axis Cult. I healed them after all, they should show me their gratitude.”

“They will thank you properly even if you don’t bring it up. You are always doing such things, that’s why your devotees doesn’t increase.”

Aqua ignored my advice and walked towards the knights.

After watching her go, a voice came from behind me.

“Ah, just put me down here. I will let my comrade carry me.”

The knights who carried her all the way here in a grand formation lowered the stretcher gently on Megumin’s request.

After being lowered, Megumin gestured at me to come over.

I didn’t recall being her designated piggy backer.

“Didn’t you say you will take care of me who had just revived?”

“I will do that tomorrow, please spare me for today. Kazuma, we will be returning to Axel tomorrow right, let’s leave first thing in the morning.”

After being carried on my back, Megumin said as she wrapped her arms around my neck as usual.

At this moment, Iris ran to us with an innocent smile.

“It’s great that you are safe, Onii-sama! Welcome back!”

“Onii-sama!?”

“Oh, it’s Iris. No, I’m not completely fine. I died and was revived.”

Iris stopped in her track in shock.

“You died once!? Onii-sama, are you alright!? Come rest in the castle until the banquet begins, Onii-sama’s room is still being kept in the same state!”

“She said Onii-sama again!!”

“Thank you. But you don’t need to worry so much, the resuscitation was done perfectly.”

Megumin who was on my back was really noisy all this while.

Why was she so excited about the phrase Onii-sama?

“That’s a relief... But Onii-sama, did you achieve a great enough merit for you to stay in the castle!?”

Iris’s expression turned from gloomy to bright in an instant as she asked expectantly.

“No, that... Well, I will fail sometimes too right? My condition wasn’t good, so I didn’t accomplish much...”

“Is that so... But it is enough that you came back safely! And even if you didn’t achieve any merits, it is still a fact that you fought for the capital. I will plead with Claire once more and maybe Onii-sama can stay in the castle!”

“.....”

“Thank you Iris. However, my death was really embarrassing, so it probably won’t work... Anyway, I will see you tonight.”

Iris looked really lonely after hearing what I said.

“... I haven’t seen you for just a while, and that Iris kid is really close to you huh.”

After Iris and Claire returned to the castle, Megumin who was on my back commented.

“Right? I finally have a sister I was looking forward to so much. Maybe I do like girls younger than me.”

“... After we go back to Axel, I will call you Onii-chan then.”

“You are an important Loli character alright? I’d prefer to have another younger sister instead.”

“Hey, it’s about time you stop treating me as a Loli character!”

Together with Megumin who was strangling me nimbly while on my back, we returned to my old room.

Part 5

After returning to the place I used to stay in, I put Megumin down on the couch as she looked around the place.

“Hmm, this place isn’t bad. Living a casual life under the care of the maids and butlers huh. I understand why you don’t want to go back.”

“I know right? The food is nice and the servants attending to your every needs. You would not want to go back if you stayed here too, Megumin... Ah— in the end, I didn’t accomplish much, so I have to return tomorrow...”

I took off my gears as I said that and sat on the bed.

As I swung my legs, Megumin who had yet to recover much of her mana replied lazily:

“... I think this is great too. Showing my prowess in the capital is fun too... However, I like the times when we complete quests together and bicker rowdily in Axel the most. From tomorrow onwards, the four of us can live together again.”

She said with a smile from the bottom of her heart...

“Oh, yeah, you are right. I am not that serious about wanting to live in the castle!”

My emotions were running high because of Megumin’s reaction for some reason. To conceal it, I kept swinging my legs.

“Really? You might be saying that now, but don’t you really enjoy your time together with that child Iris?”

Megumin asked me teasingly, amusing herself based on my reaction.

How should I put this, in the end, I only think of her as a sister...

That’s right, I just couldn’t leave her alone when I see that kid.

She was another type of loner that was different from Yunyun...

At this moment.

“Onii-sama, sorry for disturbing you...”

We were just talking about Iris and here she was, calling out to me.

“— I am very sorry, Onii-sama can’t stay in the castle. Even though I tried to convince Claire in all sorts of ways...”

Iris who was sitting beside me said with a depressed face.

“It can’t be helped. Or rather, it is my fault for not doing enough.”

“Onii-sama, you don’t need to apologize. You literally put your life on the line to fight...”

Iris then looked at me with tears in her eyes.

Looking at her serious expression, I couldn’t bring myself to tell her the fact that I was clobbered to death by a mob of Kobolds because I got too arrogant and wandered too far into enemy territory. I simply looked quietly at Iris.

And so, the two of us stared at each other in silence.

“... Did the two of you forgot that I am here?”

“No!? I, I didn’t forget!?”

“Iris is right, I didn’t forget about Megumin! I am not a lolicon, don’t look at me with such suspicious eyes! Iris is just like my sister, there is nothing strange about this atmosphere! ...W-what, Iris, don’t look at me with such sad eyes, wouldn’t that cause more misunderstanding, even I might misunderstand too!!”

Megumin ignored my suspicious actions and seemed to realize something.

“... Hmm? As expected of your Highness, you have a powerful magic item on you. The amount of mana is worlds apart from others. Is that necklace a divine level magic item? It doesn’t seem to be a product of the Home of the Crimson Magic, just where did it come from?”

Her interest was piqued by the necklace on Iris.

On Iris’ chest was a necklace with a simple design that had a different style from the other accessories she was wearing.

“You mean this? I think this was a necklace that was given as a tribute to my real Onii-sama... As the representative of the royal family, I am just holding on to it for my Onii-sama who is out on an expedition.”

Megumin leaned forward with sparkling eyes as she studied the necklace.

“And so, what powers does this magic item have? With its extraordinary magic power, its effects must be spectacular! It might be a magic item strong enough to destroy the world!”

Your fetish was obvious to see.

“No, actually... The way to use this magic item isn’t known yet. It is said that the powers of the magic item can be activated by chanting the keyword... Word-like engraving can be seen on it, but the scholars in the castle couldn’t decipher it despite their research...”

Iris showed the reverse side of the necklace to us.

Something was carved on it...

“Hmm? Isn’t that Japanese? *‘Your things are mine, my things are yours. I will turn into you!’* ... Who made this kind of keyword, are you kidding me?”

Or rather, such a sloppy keyword...

The one who handed the divine relic to the Japanese was the prime suspect.

“Hmm? W-wait, Kazuma, the Princess’ necklace is shining!?”

“O-Onii-sama!? Could it be, the magic item is activating...!?”

“Eh. W-wait, throw it out! Iris, throw it out the window right now!!”

As Iris and I frantically tore the necklace off, the gem in the middle of the necklace shot out a beam of light...!

“... Hmm? Nothing happened.”

After listening to what Megumin said, I opened my tightly shut eyes.

And I was right before me.

With my hands still stretched out, I was using a stunned face and staring at me.

“How long are you two going to stare at each other? Just now too, don’t keep forgetting about my existence.”

Megumin sighed without hesitation despite this strange event...

“Wrong, Megumin, something incredible just happened!”

“W-what, addressing me directly by name is really callous of you, Your Highness. I am an older sister, if you want to call Kazuma Onii-sama, then address me as ‘Megumin-Nee’ or ‘Onee-sama’... And it’s better for you to not talk in such a tone alright? That Claire woman said that you received a bad influence after getting involved with Kazuma, I think it’s too late to save you.”

Megumin looked at me with regretful eyes...

The me who was standing before my eyes raised his hand timidly.

“E-erm... I am Iris...”

Everyone turned silent.

“... I-I-I turned into Iris!? What is going on!? Ahhhh! For real!? A dress! I am wearing a flimsy dress! What is this, the fresh feeling of wearing woman’s clothing right after opening my eyes!”

“Onii-sama!? Onii-sama is inside my body!? Onii-sama, don’t do something so crude with my body!”

“Because, because this is bad in all sorts of manner, Iris! The dress is bad, I can’t rest easy for the lower half! Girls are amazing, to walk so confidently in public in such a defenseless state!”

As I was flipping my skirt around, me, no, Iris who was in my body grabbed onto me in tears.

“Onii-sama, don’t do that anymore! You can’t, stop!”

“You are the one who should stop! I have a rough idea what happened, but the scene of you hugging that body who is flipping the skirt around is too impactful!”

Someone knocked on the door suddenly.

“Iris-sama!? I heard you scream just now, what did they do to you!?”

Claire’s voice could be heard.

She seemed to be standing by outside the room as Iris’ escort.

In order to stop her from opening the door, I blocked it from the inside.

“C-Claire, it’s nothing! I just got a little excited when I was chatting with Onii-sama!”

“Is, is that so? That’s fine, but don’t chat too long with that man. Or you will learn bad things from him.”

“I-I’m fine, please carry on your sentry duties!”

After saying that, I slid down to the floor slowly with my back to the door as my heart was filled with the strange new experience of being forced to wear a dress and speaking in a female tone.

— The three of us sat in a circle in the middle of the room, reviewing what just happened.

“What should we do next? Personally, I don’t mind living as a pretty young girl from now on, but it is hard to give up the body that had been with me since birth. How can we undo this?”

“You just said something incredible just now. By the way, does anything feel unnatural to you? Any pain or discomfort?”

“I have no problem. As for my personal opinion, erm... A man’s body is tall and strong. I feel like going out on an adventure right now.”

“I am sorry Princess, but I hope you don’t speak in such a tone with that body...”

Megumin seemed to be on the verge of tears as she looked at Iris.

“But what a failure. Even when we tried that keyword again, the necklace only glowed, but the swapping didn’t occur...”

We tried using the power of the necklace again, but the swapping didn’t work again.

“There might be a keyword to undo the swap. But this is an amazing item since it can swap people’s body. I have never heard of such a powerful magic item before.”

Megumin’s words made Iris depressed.

“What should we do... We can’t go back to normal like this right? I will have to live on as an adventurer... Chased out of the castle and be a free adventurer... Find reliable comrades and defeat the monsters blocking my way one after another, and travel to cities I have never been to before...! Onii-sama, what should I do!? I don’t really hate such a life! Even if my body stays like this forever!”

“Calm down your highness! You just said something really stupid!”

Iris’ expression kept changing, her depressed look turned into a bright face. But we couldn’t go on like this.

If the source of the magic item’s power originates from a curse, Aqua should be able to do something about it...

... Speaking of Aqua, I remembered.

That’s right, this body swapping magic item was the one given to a Japanese by Aqua...!

“It will be fine, I know what this magic item actually is! This is a divine relic. If someone other than the one it was bestowed upon uses it, the body swap would be temporary. I don’t know how long it would take, but we definitely won’t stay this way forever.”

Megumin sighed in relief after hearing what I said.

Iris had a complicated expression for some reason.

“... Which means, we will return to normal if we just wait it out. It will be great if we recover before the victory party tonight...”

I walked to the bed and was about to sleep until it was time for the party.

“O-Onii-sama! Erm... I have a request!”

Iris sat properly in front of the bed with a serious face.

If she sat like that with my body, it feels as though I was being lectured, I really wish she didn't do that.

“W-what? ... Haha, Iris is about that age too, curious about a boy's body right? Hey, toying with my body is no good.”

“T-that's not it! Onii-sama, I should be telling you not to be mischievous with my body! ...W-well... Even if it's just once, I hope to take a look outside the castle without bringing my vassals along...”

Iris peeked at my face uncomfortably, like a child afraid of being scolded by a parent.

As she was always followed by a vassal, she had never properly toured the city she was born and raised in.

Even if she wants to sightsee, she couldn't visit the shops as she likes with a group of guards in tow.

But, she could stroll around outside with my body.

... However, would the unworldly Iris be fine alone?

I didn't know how to answer, and Megumin who had been keeping quiet sighed.

“You two are really a handful. Kazuma can't accompany you like this, so I will follow you. It's fine, I won't ask for much like your vassals. Even if you dislike someone's face and pick a fight, I will just watch from the sides.”

“You should stop her then, why else would you be accompanying her!?”

Iris stood up happily.

“Let's go together then, Onee-sama!”

“Ah, well... I did ask you to address me as Onee-sama just now, but please just call me Megumin...”

... Was it really fine for her to be an escort?

“Megumin-san, please take care of me!”

“Leave it to me. From bargaining prices to handling people looking for trouble, I will teach you everything.”

Would they really be fine!?

Part 6

After sending Iris and Megumin off, I strolled inside the castle with Claire in tow.

Since both of them had left, it wasn't appropriate for the Princess to stay inside my room alone.

I was planning to kill time causally before Iris and Megumin return from their trip.

Everyone lowered their head and bowed to me during my stroll.

I nodded in an exaggerated way in response.

Oh no, this felt really pleasant, I might get addicted to this.

“... Your Highness, what happened in that man’s room just now? The air about you seemed different... Did he teach you something bad?”

Claire who was walking behind me was talking something rude again.

“Claire, that isn’t a nice thing to say about Kazuma-san. He is a great person, he might even leave his name in the Kingdom’s history books.”

“Princess Iris, tell me what did he say to you!? As I suspected, it would be better to finish that man off...”

I really wish she wouldn’t think of such a dangerous thing right behind the person in question.

I could see the figures of adventurers everywhere I walked.

They were probably just killing time before the victory feast tonight.

Looking carefully, the people standing there were those who had exemplary performance.

Most of them had black hair and eyes, probably Japanese just like me.

I thought about chatting with my fellow countrymen, but it wasn’t convenient because of my current body.

“Hmm, isn’t this Princess Iris and Lady Claire?”

At this moment, a familiar adventurer greeted me.

Claire replied happily when she saw this adventurer.

“Mitsurugi-dono, your performance is wonderful this time too! My apologies for letting you take on the dangerous role of vanguard again.

The one talking to me was the adventurer Mitsurugi.

Mitsurugi showed us the refreshing smile of a cool guy.

“Not at all, this is nothing. I think of protecting Your Highness Iris who watches over the citizens of the Kingdom as my duty.”

He gently patted my head as he said that.

“Claire, sentence this insolent man who touched my head to death.”

“Eeh!?”

“Princess Iris, you have been acting strangely since just now. What happened!?”

He probably won over all kinds of girls unknowingly by patting their head and chatting them up with a smile.

I chased the natural airhead Mitsurugi away and continued exploring the castle.

There was a reason why I was wandering around the castle.

“Say Claire, where is Lalatina? I want to tease... No, I want to compliment her for her efforts in this battle.”

“Lady Dustiness suffered flame attacks during the battle and is covered in soot all over. She is bathing right now...”

“Claire lead the way! I am going in right now to wash her back!”

“Your Highness!? What is the matter? For a royalty to wash the back of a vassal, even if it is Lady Dustiness...”

“As thanks for all the hard work you have done, I will wash your back too, Claire. Do you dislike it?”

“No such thing Princess Iris! Let’s go, come, hurry!”

Claire usually displays exceptional loyalty towards Iris, but her expression seemed a bit dangerous as she walked briskly in front of me as if she was in a trance.

When we reached the bath inside the castle, we entered the changing room and ran right into Darkness who had just finished bathing.

Regrettably, she had already dressed herself.

“Greetings Princess Iris, are you cleansing your body before the banquet?”

Darkness said with a smile as she dried her hair with a towel.

“No, I just wanted to wash the back of Lalatina who performed wonderfully during the battle... But it seems that I came too late. Such a pity...”

I lowered in my head depressedly and Darkness became frantic.

“N-not really! I couldn’t waste Your Highness’ goodwill! There is still plenty of time, I will enter the bath again!”

She started taking her clothes off in a hurry.



“Dark...! L-Lalatina, wait, if you take off your clothes without any shame or hesitation, I, I have not braced myself mentally...!”

“P-Princess Iris, what’s the matter? Your cheeks are turning red...”

Darkness who was stripping looked at me with a concerned expression.

Her face is too close, her underwear is... No she wasn’t wearing a bra!

Ah, right, she would be wearing a dress for the feast, her strap will show if she wore a bra!

As I was staring at Darkness, Claire who had changed and wrapped herself in a towel was watching me worryingly...

“Your Highness, are you feeling alright? You have been acting strangely since just now...”

She said as she placed her cool hands onto my cheeks...!

... I understood now.

Why the Japanese who reincarnated before me wanted this divine relic.

Iris will know from the scent of the soap that I have bathed after reverting back, but I didn’t care about it right now.

A great man in Japan once said:

“Worry about tomorrow’s problem, tomorrow.”

Goddess of Fortune Eris. I express my deep gratitude for possessing such great luck...

As I offered my prayer between these two half naked beauties and was about to take my own clothes off...

My consciousness suddenly flew away—

“— How dare you speak to the boss like this! You must have braced yourself huh!”

“You, you bastard, bad mouthing the boss that far! Look, the boss turned dumb because of your words!”

“D-don’t be stupid, I didn’t turn dumb! I am just a bit shocked after being scolded so badly for the first time in my life!”

Before me were three angry men.

... Eris-sama, changing channels when I was about to be stripped, that’s too cruel.

Part 7

“Yes that’s the way, well said! Next is the winning line! ‘... *Enough talk. I am not that free either. I will turn you all into my experience points...!*’ You will make the grade after saying that, all that is left would be to beat all of them up!”

Megumin who was on my back said. She seemed out of breath.

... Hold it, what was with this situation.

I know that I have returned to my original body, but what were Iris and Megumin doing, this looked like a prelude to a fight!

“Looking down on us this much...! Let’s get it on!”

What did they say to the guy called boss before me? He swung his fist at me with tears in his eyes.

“Uwah!? You, you guys! Can’t you see that I have someone on my back, you despicable scoundrels!? If you want to fight, let me put her down first!”

“Despicable scoundrels!? Hey, aren’t you the one who said ‘I don’t need to go all out against trash like you. I will give you a handicap, so you three come at me together’!”

“Just how much do you want to insult our boss! What did he ever do to you!?”

“It’s fine, let’s just beat them up! Calling us delinquents out of the blue, let’s make them suffer!”

After taking a hit, my response agitated them further.

“Kazuma, are you back to normal! Hurry, transfer your mana to me via drain touch, then I can fight as well!”

“You are the one who stirred up this trouble! Settle it yourself!”

I nursed my face that was hit as I transferred mana to Megumin with tears in my eyes—!

“They are just a bunch of delinquents, powerless before my overwhelming strength.”

“Your job is not the physical attack type, but you are still a high level adventurer. Why did you get so serious in beating up normal people?”

We defeated the trio, but left for the castle as the number of onlookers increased.

“I wanted the Princess to have a go at it, but you revert back just when the mood was great. Such a pity.”

“No, what if Iris gets into trouble? Don’t involve the fragile Princess into a fight.”

My words surprised Megumin.

“What are you talking about, royalty are really powerful alright? Because of their bloodline, the royals have great talents, and receive an elite education to protect themselves from young. That Princess is stronger than Kazuma okay? She will win easily even if she fought in Kazuma’s body.”

That was exaggerating too much.

“By the way, how did the quarrel start? What did those guys do to you two?”

“Actually, after shopping around all sorts of stores with the Princess, they appeared out of a desolated alley.”

I see, and then they started harassing Megumin...

“Normally, if they saw a girl like me, shouldn’t they say: ‘Hey, your girl looks pretty good. We will give her a good time, so you can scram now’ and start harassing me right. But they only took a glance at me without saying anything. Seeing how gutless they were, I scolded them fiercely.”

“You are the delinquent! Don’t drag innocent pedestrians into this!”

W-what should I do, I should apologize...

“Forget it, I might be the one who taunted them, but they are the ones who hit you first. It will be fine, we will win even if it got taken to court. The ones who got physical after a little squabble are the one in the wrong.”

“That’s not for someone who loses her temper with just a little provocation to say! Ah, really... I will apologize if I ever run into them again...”

While I was troubling over that, we finally reached the castle gates.

“Never mind, some things happened, but Her Highness had fun. It was her first time eating from a roadside stall, she really enjoyed herself.”

“Really... that’s fine... I guess? I hope they won’t say I was a bad influence again...”

“... Kazuma spoils her too much. Not just her young age, many aspects of her character overlaps with mine too, it makes me strangely uneasy.”

“You, you are still insisting that your character overlaps with that beautiful, gentle, and elegant girl?”

I entered the castle gates while discussing that with Megumin.

Darkness and Claire who had blown their top were standing there like statues, waiting for us.

Part 8

As I was shrinking in a corner of the banquet, trying to avoid attention, Aqua came to me while cradling a high class wine carefully.

“Hey Kazuma, why are you so stupid? You always treat me like a fool, now is my chance to use that against you. Hey Kazuma-san, you are really big idiot huh?”

I couldn’t retort the idiot who was cradling the bottle like a treasure.

“No, I didn’t have such intentions in the beginning too. But, how should I put this... All sorts of people bowed their heads at me while I was strolling in the castle, and I felt that I would be forgiven even if I did something...!”

“So you really are an idiot huh? If I search the term ‘idiot’ on a computer, Kazuma’s name would be the first result right?”

I thought about snatching away her bottle and making her cry, but I couldn’t say anything right now.

The moment I returned to my body, Iris also reverted back to her body in the changing room.

After seeing Iris turned frantic suddenly, they found out about the situation after asking her...

“Even Iris got so furious... Damn it, Onii-sama can’t live anymore...”

“... Really, just squat in this corner today, be a good boy and don’t attract any attention. I will get you some delicious food later.”

Aqua who was gentler than usual healed my fragile soul.

No matter what, she was still a goddess, and was reliable when I was really suffering...

After Megumin found out what I was doing before returning to my body, she turned silent just like Darkness.

“As expected of the one who was with me the longest. I really hope the others could learn Aqua’s leniency. I have been wondering since just now, what is that wine you are cradling? When we went to search in the city yesterday, we didn’t find any good wine right? Did you buy something else?”

“Oh this, didn’t the people in the city said they were giving out special rewards for outstanding performances? They asked me what I wanted, and since everyone was busy, I asked for this wine on behalf of our team.”

This girl decided on our reward on her own.

I would worry about Aqua dropping it if she held on to it.

I was thinking of safekeeping it for her before we return to the mansion and stretched out my hand.

“It couldn’t be helped, wait til we go back to Axel, we all can...”

I was about to say ‘drink it together’ when Aqua smacked my hand away.

“... What are you trying to do? You will break it or lose it somewhere anyway, it would be a waste of the high class wine. It would be fine if you bought the wine yourself, but this wine is a reward for everyone’s exceptional performance. Here, I will hold on to it for you.”

“Don’t wanna. I got this wine myself, I won’t give it to anyone alright? After all, the one who gave it to me said ‘*Everyone performed well, but Aqua-sama’s work is exemplary!*’ It’s all because of me that no one died in battle, which made him happy. Getting this reward should be normal for me.”

“Hey, this is the fruit of everyone’s labour!?! It look really exquisite, let me... ah this girl!”

Aqua was afraid that her precious wine would be taken and ran away in a panic.

And I became alone...

— With the exceptional adventurers at the core, there were many different groups around the place.

As for the nobles who didn’t mingle with the crowd, they were also chatting about the battle in high spirits.

“Ara, this battle was a piece of cake! With Lady Dustiness leading the way, her team fought on the front lines like ferocious lions, contributing greatly to the battle!”

“That’s right! Lady Dustiness who took all the enemies’ attack alone, as well as Aqua-dono who purified a large number of undead and could heal wounds in an instant no matter how grievous they were. Last but not least, Megumin-dono who gave the retreating Demon King Army the final blow! With just the three of them, they might even defeat the Demon King!”

“Indeed, the three of them would be able to fight on par even with the Demon King! I already heard that the three of them took down several bosses of the Demon King Army. As expected of them...”

“We also have the pride of the kingdom, the magic sword hero Mitsurugi-dono! If he joins this trio, wouldn’t that be the strongest team that will surpass the Demon King...? He also has a lancer and an archer girl in his team. Wouldn’t that be a perfectly balanced team?”

“That’s it!” x3

Hey, did you ignore one person from the formation of that team?

Well, I understood it clearly too.

I didn't achieve much and even died to Kobolds.

And the gaze that fell on me...

"That's the one..."

"Yes, that's him. Lady Claire mentioned that he is nothing but talk..."

"And his job is the weakest adventurer, and his level is low."

"Really, why did Lady Dustiness allow such a person to be her comrade..."

"Maybe he is a guy who is good at currying favours. He even amused Princess Iris and tried to move into the castle to stay..."

How uncouth. But I couldn't retort because some of the things they said were true!

Unlike me who was staying in a corner alone, my other team members were surrounded by nobles and adventurers, and showered with praise.

Megumin seemed to be surrounded by mages.

People healed by Aqua congregated around her.

Mitsurugi was the handsome guy representative of the capital, greeting groups of people around skillfully.

It seemed that the ratio of girls were higher around him.

Observing carefully, Megumin was getting arrogant after hearing compliments, and Aqua was still running around with her bottle, chasing those who came near her away.

She probably misunderstood and thought everyone was after her wine.

Lastly...

"That's right, she is a daughter of an aristocratic family after all."

The dress Darkness was wearing differs from the one she wore in the other banquet. Normal adventurers were attending this victory feast too, so she was sitting with some of the noble guests and chatting happily in the VIP table.

A group of knights was around them, it wasn't easy to go near.

This scene made me realized the difference in our status, and it felt a little lonely.

— At this moment, Iris who was seated at the VIP table locked eyes with me.

Iris was furious earlier, but her eyes seemed really lonely right now.

I will be going back tomorrow.

It was a relief that the last time I saw Iris wasn't her angry face.

To be frank, I wished I could see her smile for one last time...

"Oh, so you are still in the castle, plebian." Suddenly, someone talked to me who was by myself.

She wore her usual white suit even for this banquet.

It was Claire who was glaring at me with a wine glass in hand.

I didn't contribute to the battle this time and with the body swapping incident to boot, her tone towards me were worlds apart from the first time we met.

Was she influenced negatively by me too?

"The guest of honour tonight, Lady Dustiness and the rest will stay in the castle tonight. You can go back already."

"... No, I understand you are angry. I also know that I was too arrogant. But this is already the last night, so just be nicer to me. Aren't you a little happy to bathe together with Iris?"

"D-don't sprout nonsense, what are you saying!? That I am happy to bathe together with Her Highness... That... Forget it. I won't pursue the matter."

This woman definitely has other feelings beside loyalty for Iris.

Be it Darkness and her unique fetish and old man Alderp, why are all the nobles like that.

"Just like your attempt to capture the chivalrous thief, you didn't show any result this time either... You are really all talk. I did some investigation during the fight with the bosses of the Demon King Army, the one who dealt the final blow were Lady Dustiness and that mage right?"

She said something sarcastic again.

"My job is to provide support for them. By the way, they have flaws too alright?"

"I already knew about their flaws. However, it won't be a problem if the kingdom provides support. They would be invited to join Mitsurugi-dono's party later. That way, we can realize the grand dream of taking down the Demon King right? Don't you already have loads of money? Why not leave the team and live merrily in that town of yours?"

What was this woman talking about?

"I agree with you on the living merrily part, but why are you forcing me to leave the team? A group of ruffians said the same thing to me, but came back running in tears after teaming up with them. Can you support them properly?"

"Like the battle this time, just support them with a group. With their exceptional skill, their strengths can only be brought out in a large scale battle. Do you have any skills like they do? ...Think about it. In the end, if you display an ability better than Mitsurugi-dono and the others, we can just laugh this matter off."

Asking a guy who was just killed by Kobolds to display his powers on the same day, what was this 'S' type woman saying?

Enough, I didn't want to stay in this castle anymore, I will go home!

... Ah, right.

“Putting that aside, what are you going to do about Iris’ necklace? Don’t let her wear that, it seems to be a divine relic. My comrade Aqua can seal the divine relic, how about leaving it to her?”

Claire gave an unexpected answer to my advice.

“That can’t be done. That is a tribute for the first prince Jatis. Before His Highness Jatis returns, we can’t dispose of it on our own... Or rather, it is just a divine relic that switches body for a short period of time, it is not harmful at all right?”

Claire averted her flushed face as she said that.

... She experienced something good during that incident today.

Forget it, it would just be a simple decoration if the keyword wasn’t chanted.

And the switch would just be a short time.

Claire then smiled gently.

“Rather than that— you will be leaving the capital tomorrow. The capital doesn’t need you. If you insist on staying, I will chase you out by force. Never mind, you can enjoy this party today too... if you can show the merits of you deserving it.”

Part 9

I came crying back to my residence and wailed in the dim room.

“How vexing! What is with that woman, saying such hurting words on this last night! I know I am at fault too! Or rather, it is all my fault!!”

Since Darkness and the others won’t be able to get away from the crowd, they would attend the party til the end and stay the night in the castle.

... Maybe they would really join Mitsurugi’s team?

What was with this feeling of being alienated?

I had always been planning on leaving them behind and join a normal party. But when I tried imagining such a situation, I felt a sense of unease...

Enough, I don’t care anymore!

I will return to Axel and use the bounty for Sylvia along with Vanir’s payout to live a carefree life!

What should I do after returning to town?

It might be a carefree life, but spending every day sleeping would be boring.

Not having games and computers in this world was a tragedy.

No, speaking of which, Aqua brought some games back from the Home of the Crimson Magic.

Alright, I will confiscate them from her and play to my heart’s content.

As I thought about that, I realized...

... I had yet to decide the match with Iris properly yet...

While mulling over Iris as I thought about Iris.

Someone knocked on the window.

— Looking outside, I saw her standing nonchalantly on the 2nd floor's window ledge.

Under the moonlight, a silver haired thief girl was standing there.

After opening the window, Chris entered briskly.

“Yo. Isn't there a party tonight? You are back really early huh?”

Chris said as she smiled knowingly, seemed like she found out everything.

Why did she know about the divine relic and the party?

Maybe there was a thief guild that was exclusive only to thieves.

“I won't agree no matter how many times you ask. But I will tell you what I do know. There is a divine relic that can switch bodies in the castle. However, the period is short and unlike the monster summoning magic item, I think it is rather harmless.”

I remained lying and twisted my body after saying all that, turning my back to Chris.

Or rather, I hope that I could bask in my memories of Iris at least for tonight.

Although Eris-sama requested this of me when I died, I just didn't have the drive to do it.

Chris said to my back:

“That magic item. If one of the body dies during the swap, it won't switch back.”

Chris muttered casually...

“... Hey, what did you just say?”

I got up from bed and asked.

Seeing how frantic I was, Chris laughed softly.

“If that magic item was used well, one can gain eternal life, that's how powerful it was. If your body starts getting old, you can swap with a healthy body and kill the other party. It would be even better if you transfer your fortune to the younger person in advance.”

She said something incredible.

... I see, so it was a divine relic after all.

But right now, the only ones who knew the real power of the divine relic were just me and Chris.

If we leave it alone, it won't be misused since no one knew right?

“I remember that this magic item was bought by some noble at the very beginning.”

Chris said calmly, as if she had seen through what I was thinking.

“But, it somehow landed in the hands of the Princess... Isn’t that strange? Who, and for what purpose, gave that thing as a tribute to the royal family?”

... Wasn’t the objective obvious?

The goal was to swap bodies with the person that held the highest authority of the kingdom...

“Hey, this is no time to joke. We have to report this to the big wigs in the kingdom...!”

Chris shook her head regretfully.

“I advise you not to do that. Can you predict the movement of the people who knew about the powers of the divine relic? I can tell for certain that the nobles will lay their eyes on the divine relic... Not just that, the royals might even use it for misdeeds too. No, the more authority one has, the more one craves for eternal life.”

I was speechless.

“I only told you about this because you are someone who won’t use it for evil even if you got hold of the divine relic.”

We weren’t that close, so why did she trust me that easily?

But it was true that I didn’t have the guts to misuse this thing.

Even when I swapped bodies with Iris, the most I did was take a bath with others.

... Hmm. I did do a lot of misdeeds...

Chris said to me who had fallen silent again.

“Hey, you are the playmate of the Princess, right?”

With the moonlight behind her, Chris stood by the window again and smiled.

“Want to go to Her Highness’ side and play?”

Putting a stop to this malicious scheme!

Part 1

In the capital that was shrouded by darkness, Chris and I headed towards the castle.

According to her, infiltrating the castle by cover of night would be the best course of action.

After achieving overwhelming victory against the Demon King Army, the guards would be more relaxed about their duties.

“Hey, what do you have there? It looks cool, where did you get it from?” Chris who covered her mouth with a black cloth said with her eyes on me.

“This was given to me by a suspicious clerk working in a certain magic item shop in Axel. I heard it that it’s a top seller.”

To avoid exposing my identity, I put on the mask Vanir gave me.

“Hmm~ I want one too, what kind of person is that suspicious clerk?”

“What kind...? ...He works diligently in chasing the noisy crows away from the trash area, known in the neighbourhood as Crow-Slayer Vanir-san...”

“Hmm~ Isn’t he a really earnest guy!? I want to meet him!”

I wonder what would happen if they really got to meet.

Or rather, nothing good would come of letting a devout Eris believer meet with that devil.

Our objective was to infiltrate the castle and grab Iris’ necklace.

Since I was born, aside from sexual harassment, I had only committed minor misdemeanours like public urination and jaywalking. This was the first time I was doing something like a real ‘criminal’ which made me nervous.

I didn’t want to hurt others and didn’t have the guts to do so either, so I left my katana in the inn.

To lessen the load if I needed to run, I didn’t even wear a chest plate and chose dark clothes that would allow me to blend into the night.

Bow and arrows could be used in all sorts of scenarios, so I brought them along...

Chris stopped and looked up at the castle wall that towers over us.

“Well then, are you ready, minion?”

“Any time, lady boss.”

“.....” x2

“Hey, don’t call me lady boss.”

“Then don’t call me a minion! And why is my position lower than yours?” We hid in the shadows of the building and argued quietly.

“Because my job is a thief, I am the professional here. Your job is adventurer right?”

“That’s true, but since I have ‘Farsight’ that gives me night vision, I am more suited for burglary, I should be the boss in terms of ability right?”

We couldn’t address each other by our real names inside the castle either.

And so, we debated on how to address each other...

“But but, the one renowned as the chivalrous thief in the capital is me okay? There is no end to this, let’s just settle it in a simple match!”

“Match huh. Well then— Luck is necessary for thieves, so let’s play rock scissors paper.”

My only strong point is my excellent luck.

Chris probably didn’t know about my stats.

“Rock paper scissors? Alright, let’s do this! Now that you mentioned it, I lost when we competed with ‘Steal’ last time, today I will avenge myself.”

“Hehe, you have been tricked, Chris! I have never lost in rock scissors paper before! Okay, rock...!

“— Let’s think of a way to sneak in, Assistant-kun.”

“You’re right, Big Boss. And I didn’t become a NEET in the castle for nothing. When I got bored and wander around the castle, I figured out its rough layout. I will lead the way.” I lost in rock scissors paper for the first time in my life.

As expected of a devotee of the goddess of fortune, Eris, her luck was really good.

After we came to a consensus, we tied down the way to call each other. Avoiding the guarded main gate, we went around to the side walls of the castle.

“Assistant-kun, are you planning to break in through here? The walls are really tall, looks at least three stories high... I can’t do anything about it...” Before Chris even finished, I took out my archery tools.

“Snipe.” This was the arrow with a hook in front and ropes trailing behind it, used during the battle with Destroyer.

After aiming with my skill before shooting the arrow, it hooked onto the edge of the castle wall accurately.

I tugged onto the rope to make sure it is secure. Chris opened her mouth wide in surprise.

“Assistant-kun is really useful. Forget about being an adventurer, form a chivalrous thieving group that focus on punishing the evil nobles together with me.”

“If my money runs out and I have nothing better to do, I’ll consider it... Alright, let’s go!”

Part 2

The time should be about one or two hours after midnight.

The castle lights were off and everyone seemed to be fast asleep.

“From now on, it would be better if I walk in front. I will use my night vision too and move slowly, you just need to follow behind me, Big Boss.”

“Understood, Assistant-kun.”

We were in the courtyard of the castle right now.

Our goal was the top level— Iris’ room.

Walking towards the door within the castle from the courtyard, I met the first obstacle.

“Bad news Big Boss. The door is locked.”

“It’s my turn, time for my lock picking skills to shine.” Chris squatted in front of the door and took out two ear-picks like objects and started fiddling with the keyhole.

With a click, the door was opened effortlessly.

As expected of a professional. If I have any spare skill points, I will learn this skill.

After getting inside the castle successfully, we continued moving in the dark. With me leading the way of course, and Chris behind.

We had yet to run into patrolling guards so far. To think that things would go so smoothly if the jinx Aqua wasn’t around.

“Oh, someone is coming. My ‘Detect Enemy’ sense is tingling.”

“Hide in that corner, don’t forget to activate ‘Hide’.” We hid in the shadows as the footsteps of a guard drew near.

Probably the guard doing patrols.

“Hey~, Assistant-kun, do you have to stick so close? We already used ‘Hide’, you won’t be discovered and don’t need to work so hard right?”

“It’s not good to underestimate the enemy, Big Boss. Here, stick closer, quick!”

“Assistant-kun, this is too close!”

“Big Boss, this is for the sake of getting the divine relic back and world peace. Please bear with it!”

While we were arguing softly, the patrolling guard stopped.

“... Is someone there?” He asked and shone his light this way, but thanks to ‘Hide’, we were not discovered.

“Just my imagination...”

After seeing the guard leave, we sighed in relief.

“Really, that’s why I’m telling you underestimating the enemy isn’t good. If I didn’t handle it carefully, we would have been in trouble.”

“No no no, it is all because you that I made some noise, which attracted the guard’s attention! If you sexually harass me again, you will suffer divine punishment from the goddess Eris.”

Oh no, speaking of which, Eris-sama was still watching me.

It was true that I had been acting too true to my instinct recently.

It would be a good idea to watch myself.

— Moving through the vast castle, we reached the stairs leading to the second floor.

Iris’ room was at the top most level.

“Hey Assistant-kun, if possible, I would like to take a look in the treasure vault. Like I said, both divine relics are in the capital, so the one that can control monsters might be in the castle. The only places with such an acute treasure presence are Alderp’s mansion and this castle.”

The reaction from Alderp’s mansion was definitely Aqua’s hagoromo, which meant the remaining divine relic was inside this castle.

“The treasure vault is on the second floor. We will reach it in no time after climbing up the stairs. But there are powerful barriers, and probably traps...”

“That isn’t a problem, I came prepared.” We headed up the stairs and towards the vault.

At the entrance of the vault, we discovered a powerful barrier that even I could sense with my minute magical prowess.

The only ones who could undo this barrier would probably be someone at Aqua’s level.

Chris took out a certain magic item at this moment.

“This is a tool that only the demon race possess, called Barrier Killer. Apparently, the Crimson Magic Clan was selling them... I don’t know how they got them, but I managed to ‘borrow’ this from a noble who bought it.”

Barrier Killer?

I heard that term somewhere before. Or rather, I found the shape familiar, where did I... Never mind.

Chris meddled with the magic item for a while and with a pop, the barrier was dispelled easily.

“Amazing, now we just need to watch out for the traps.”

“That’s right. For us who have skills to detect and disarm traps, this is a piece of cake.”

I took out my lighter and lit it to observe the surrounding.

The vault was illuminated and all sorts of neatly arranged treasures appeared before us.

“Oops, there is a trap here. The alarm will ring if you take this treasure with you. If the target divine relic isn’t here, don’t touch the goods here.” After hearing her words, I nodded and started searching together with her.

That might be so, but I had no idea what the monster summoning divine relic looks like, and had to rely on Chris and her treasure detection skill.

What I could do was keep an eye out and admire the treasures here.

... At that moment, I noticed something.

“Assistant-kun, the thing we are looking for isn’t here. There are many powerful magic items, but nothing at the level of the divine relic... Assistant-kun?”

That was something that didn’t fit in with this treasure vault.

Something I was very familiar with.

“Isn’t this a manga...”

The thing before me should be a manga from Japan.

Chris probably thought about something after seeing my nostalgic expression, and watched me silently.

“Erm... If you take that away...”

Chris was hesitant to speak, but I got what she mean.

“It’s fine, just a book from back home, just feeling a little nostalgic.” For some reason, Chris looked a little guilty after hearing what I said.

“Don’t be sad for me. And I bought that manga before, so...” While I was speaking, my gaze shifted to the other book besides the manga.

... It was a peerless treasure.

You will be arrested just by holding that book in Japan— That’s how valuable it was.

“... Let’s go then, Assistant-kun... Oh right! After sealing the divine relics away, I will collect a bunch of books from your country and give them to you, so...”

As Chris was saying something sentimental, I grabbed that treasure unhesitantly!

“Assistant-kun—!!”

“— Over there, the intruders went that way!”

“There are two of them! We don’t know what their goal is, but we can’t let them do as they wish!” The guards shouted while Chris and I ran with all our might.

“Damn, what a formidable trap! It even got me...!”

“Assistant-kun, I need to have a good talk about life with you later! You are living too unrestrainedly!”

“Big Boss, now is not the time for banter, we need to overcome this difficulty!”

“That may be so, but you have no right to say that!” All the lights in the castle were lit and everyone had been awoken by the alarm from the vault.

“‘Create Water’! And ‘Freeze’!” The corridor we ran past was covered in ice.

Screams and curses came from behind.

“Having Assistant-kun around is really convenient.”

“Don’t just say that Big Boss, and help me!”

Chris who was chiding me as she ran by my side showed a thumbs up.

“Okay, I will show you the ability of the Big Boss!”

While she was saying that, she turned behind and took something out from her pocket.

It was a thin metallic wire.

“Wire trap!” Chris shouted and threw out the wire.

The moment the wire touched the walls along the corridor, it became as taut as a steel bar.

It was like a spider web.

Even a small-sized person wouldn’t be able to get through that web easily.

“This is just to buy time, but it is enough for us to escape! Assistant-kun, we can’t complete the mission after blowing things up like this, let’s withdraw for now!”

Chris said as she drew the dagger on her waist and forced open a window and looked around— She was probably looking for an escape route.

“No, wait, I want to settle things today! I will be chased out of the capital tomorrow!”

Chris frowned when she heard what I said, and seemed troubled.

“E-even if you say that... If we, a thief and adventurer duo were to fight with others head on, we will be nabbed easily! And are you someone who fought so determinedly!?” That brought me back to my senses. By the way, why was I working so desperately?

I wasn’t a hot blooded character, and definitely wasn’t a summoned hero who was chosen.

Calm down, I was a calm man.

That’s right, once I return to Axel, I would be able to enjoy my life every day.

Stop struggling and run away, live a carefree life back in my home—

No matter how much I tried to convince myself, the times I spent with Iris appeared before my eyes like a carousel.

Iris who was moody after I bullied her.

Iris who listened with sparkling eyes as I recounted the tale about purifying the lich in the dungeon.

After being instigated by me, Iris stole snacks from the dining hall and was warned by Claire in the end. Even though she felt a little guilty, even though she was scolded together with me, Iris looked a little happy.

The angry Iris who came to get back at me after she told some nonsense I made up to her vassals arrogantly and became a laughingstock.

Finally, Iris who answered this to my question—

“This is the first time I’ve met someone like you. Everyone keeps on their toes around me and showers me with concern. Only one person was lofty, rude, merciless, and taught all sorts of weird things to me, despite me being royalty. He even went all out to compete with me without any semblance of an adult...”

That doesn’t sound like a compliment at all

“But I am listing out the reasons I like you though?”

But that kid likes me the way I was.

— I didn’t understand why I want to stay with her so much.

Or why she sticks so close to me.

No matter what, Iris would become a more matured princess a few years later.

She wouldn’t want to meet a suspicious man with such a large difference in status by then.

No, from the moment I leave the capital, our ties will disappear.

Thinking about it this way, this was the last night I would be looked up to like an elder brother.

“Assistant-kun, let’s withdraw! Even if you want to return to Axel— though it would waste some time— I will help you out!”

However, that was why...

“Big Boss, I...”

I had been dragged into troublesome matters one after another.

But I couldn’t wait for next time.

Not for tomorrow.

That’s right—

“I will show you my true ability.”

“... Assistant-kun?”

“— We cut through the web! The thieves are... they are still here, they didn’t escape!”

The guards blocking the way cut through the web, leaving us with no cover from them.

“Thieves, I will make you all regret breaking into the royal castle! Just leave one of them alive to interrogate their motive!” A man who looked like their captain drew the sword on his waist and said some scary words.

The guard blocking our way and watching our every move said: “Captain, one of them has a dagger, the other is unarmed. Let’s capture the weaker looking one who doesn’t have any weapons!”

The man who was addressed as captain nodded.

“Hmm, the silver haired one does seem stronger. Alright, don’t hold back against the silver hair! Two of us would be enough to take on that masked weakling!”

— What was with me tonight?

Did I make up my mind to go all out?

“The opponent is a suspicious thief, don’t show any mercy!”

I was in top condition.

“The two of them are not moving... Hey, intruders! This is your chance to surrender! You might get to keep your life! Now, just give up...”

I didn’t know why, but condition tonight was excellent.

— The man known as captain took a stance with his sword against me.

“ ... ”

Seeing me stretch out my hand quietly, he lowered his sword.

“Oh? You want to surrender? Okay, that silver haired guy over there, put down your weapon too! Then you can keep your ahhhhh—!?”

The moment he touched my hand, the captain screamed and he fell to the ground trembling.

“What—!” x3

Everyone present...

Gasped in shock, including Chris.

The one known as the captain did have great stamina.

But aside from Darkness whose physical power could rival a monster, no one could withstand my ‘Drain Touch’ when I was in pristine condition.

“W-what did this guy do—!?”

Seeing their captain down on the floor, all the guards took a step back.

At this moment, I—!

“Hahahaha! Great! This feels awesome! I am filled with power— I don’t know why though! I will let you witness my prowess tonight!”

“A-assistant-kun!? You are acting really strange! What happened!?”

I charged at the guards—!

Part 3

“Big Boss! Just turn right around that corner and we will see the stairs to the topmost level!”

“Alright, I-I got it! B-by the way Assistant-kun, you feel different from usual... even your tone is weird, what happened!?”

I ran side by side with Chris, with curses coming from behind just like before.

However, the content was a bit different than earlier...

“Thieves! Strong thieves have infiltrated the castle! Get those elite adventurers up, quickly!”

“Listen up! Don’t attack recklessly! The opponent is skilled, but it seems that he didn’t plan to kill anyone yet! Even so, don’t act rashly!”

“Knight commander! Please evacuate this way to a safe zone!!”

“B-but we can’t let that masked man go any further...!”

As I started getting into my groove, the guards showed incredible fear.

Ohh, enemy ahead!

“Get out of the way, the Silver Haired Thieving Group is coming through! If you don’t want to get hurt, make way!”

“Assistant-kun, when did we decide on that name!? Things have blown up, so you can be the leader, change it to Masked Thieving Group or something, quick...”

I raised my hand towards the sword wielding guard before me...!

“Wind Breath!”

“Ughhh! Damn, always using such tricks... Ahhhhh!?” I blew the dirt in my hand over with wind magic.

And then grabbed the hand of the blinded guard, and used Drain touch while pressing his weapon down.

I immobilized the opponent in a couple of second and said nonchalantly:

“Masked Thieving Group is no good. It sounds as if I’m the main culprit, I don’t like it.”

“I don’t want to be the main culprit! I didn’t want to blow things up and attract so much attention! If things go badly, I will be targeted just because I have silver hair! And what is that technique you just used!?”

I couldn’t tell her straight that I could use the skills of a Lich.

“This is my certain kill technique, so I can’t reveal too much. Instead of that— I won’t be able to handle it if the opponent also uses magic... Hey, someone that looks like a mage really showed up, I will leave him to you, Big Boss!”

The guards who looked as if they just got up from bed blocked our path.

Two of them wore armour, and one of them had a robe.

“Leave it to me! I will take care of that one...! ‘Skill Bind’!” Chris used a skill faster than the robed mage.

“‘Lightning’! ...Hmm? Ah!?” The mage was stumped when his magic failed to activate.

I took out my rope as I ran.

“Bind!”

I threw the rope at the two guards.

The rope moved under the effect of magic and binded the soldiers as if it had its own will, sealing their movement.

The skill Chris taught me was very useful during a crisis.

But it consumes a lot of mana as it was a rather powerful skill. However...!

I approached that robed man and absorbed his mana until he fainted.

My mana that was depleted after using bind refilled instantly.

“Another one of our guys is down! What is with that guy! And he is unarmed!”

“Where are the adventurers!? Haven’t the powerful adventurers arrived yet!?”

The guards’ shouts were now no different from screams.

“B-because... The alcohol content was higher for the feast, they are all dead drunk...”

“Adventurers are not reliable after all!”

I sighed in relief after hearing that shout from behind me.

When facing high level adventurers, my disadvantage would be too obvious.

“Knights and guards are a terrible matchup against opponents with thieving skills! Can’t we do anything about this!?”

“It is impossible to use the mana intensive ‘Bind’ repeatedly...! Does this guy have plenty of manatite on him...!?”

“But I didn’t see him taking any manatite out! Which means...”

“That thief has enough mana to rival the Crimson Magic Clan...!?”

I heard the conversation from the guards behind me.

Their evaluation of me was rising a lot, even though I was just absorbing more mana from them with Drain Touch.

And so...

“Ahhh! Oh no, don’t let them get to the top most level! I don’t know what their goal is, but Her Highness Iris is there...!?” The two of us sprinted towards the top most level where Iris was—

“Wire Trap! Wire Trap! Wire Trap!”

“Alright, no one can break through here any time soon! Next, we will...” Chris breathe a sigh of relief, and then—

“— I just need to arrest the both of you and ask what your objectives are... Who are the two of you? Are you the rumoured chivalrous thief?”

Turning back, I saw Mitsurugi standing there fully armed.

And...

“To cut off your own retreat path. Intruders, you can’t escape.”

The ones who announced this were Claire and Rain who had serious expressions.

And a large number of nobles’ knights and nobles watching from afar.

Part 4

“What should we do, Assistant-kun. With that many of them, we are trapped!”

Chris said quietly with a slightly hoarse voice.

After taking a look, there wasn’t any other mages aside from Rain.

With Mitsurugi leading the way, the knights drew their swords and edged closer.

The other nobles thought the match was already set and were amusedly watching the show of the knights shooting fishes in a barrel.

“Claire-san, I heard that masked man is very strong. He might be unarmed, but who knows what he will do if we push him. I will take him on, please deal with the silver haired young man with the knights.”

“... Hey, Assistant-kun, why am I being treated like a boy since just now, do I really look that much like a guy with the cloth covering my mouth?”

“The root of the issue is your slender body... Big boss, don’t be depressed, now is the crucial moment.”

I consoled Chris who was noticeably saddened by my follow up remark and faced Mitsurugi.

Mitsurugi carefully took a stance with his hands on the hilt of his magic sword and stared at me.

“Big Boss, if we take down the strongest guy, we can intimidate the others. Allow me to defeat that good for nothing cool guy in an instant. Let’s break through in the confusion right after that.”

“Hey, I heard that. The good for nothing cool guy you mentioned is me right? Defeat me in an instant... I am really being looked down by an unarmed man. Alright, I will show you my true...”

Before Mitsurugi even finished, I raised my hand towards his magic sword.

As a high level adventurer with a top tier job, Mitsurugi should be able to withstand my Drain Touch for quite a while even if I managed to steal his weapon.

“This movement, are you planning to use Steal? Unfortunately, after I lost to a certain man, I carry on my person lots of redundant items to guard against this skill. Just give up now and...”

“Freeze.”

I cut off Mitsurugi’s words and used freezing magic.

It was just beginner magic, so Mitsurugi thought it was just a move to keep him in check. He continued to move cautiously against me.

I walked towards him openly...

“What are you scheming? Take this...!?”

He wanted to perform a sword drawing strike, but was surprised when the magic sword wouldn't budge because the sheath had been frozen.

I used this chance to cover Mitsurugi's mouth and nose with my hand...!

“Create Water!”

“Guuguu!?” Water filled Mitsurugi's mouth and he grabbed my hand in a panic as he drowned.

“Can you admit your loss and back down?”

When he heard what I said, he shut his mouth to resist and clenched his fists...!

“Freeze!”

“Kah!”

One instant before his fist hit me, the water in his nose and mouth froze into ice. He shivered violently.

“Mitsurugi-dono!”

Claire screamed. I let go of Mitsurugi and he knelt to the ground with both hands on his throat.

“He probably won't suffocate if you help him defrost. Is there anyone who thinks he is stronger than this fellow! Come at me bro! ... Big Boss, now is our chance! Charge in!”

“I can't figure out whether you are strong or weak. However, I certainly don't want to be your enemy...”

Mitsurugi was defeated in an instant as I predicted, making the knights around me back away in fear.

Chris who was still making sarcastic comments broke through the encirclement of the knights together with me.

“Rain, being a little rough would be fine too, thaw Mitsurugi's throat quick! And what is the lot of you doing! Attack them! Even if Mitsurugi-dono is defeated, we can't just let them get away!”

“But from their high evasion rate, the two of them probably have the Escape skill! If they are determined to run, we can't do anything...! Hey! Split into two groups! The thieves wouldn't know the layout of the castle as well as we do! You lot, flank them!”

“Calm down everyone, we can capture them in no time, so stay calm!”

The nobles in front of us started fleeing in all directions, getting in the way of the knight's pursuit.

Taking this chance during the chaos, Chris and I used 'Bind' on the knights together.

They assumed we were not familiar with the layout of the castle. Unfortunately for them, I didn't wander around the castle all these days for nothing.

If we pass through here...!

“Assistant-kun, behind you! An attack is coming!”

Turning back, I saw Rain who had healed Mitsurugi pointing her staff my way as she chanted.

“Princess Iris is right in front! Instead of letting them through, we should kill them off! We can ask Aquadono to use resurrection on them after the fact!! Rain, just do it!”

While Claire was shouting frantically, the gem at the tip of Rain’s staff started glowing eerily.

Taking the bow slung on my back, I shot an arrow at the tip of the staff!

“Snipe!”

“Hyaa!?”

The tip of the staff shattered and Rain let out a soft cry. She was too scared to move.

Claire and the knights who saw this looked shocked.

“Who is that guy!? Why is such a skilled person resorting to theft!?” Claire groaned vexingly as she watched us escape.

Part 5

“— Iris’ room is right ahead. Big Boss, please place a web here.”

“Understood. My mana is almost depleted, so just this once.”

Once we reached the corridor to Iris’ room, Chris set a trap to block off any pursuers.

Thanks to our Escape skill, we had a huge lead over the guards chasing us.

Standing before the entrance to Iris’ room, we opened the door...!

“Intruders, you actually made it this far! Protecting the people, the country and the royal family is the duty of House Dustiness, so I will...”

We closed the door gently.

“Don’t shut the door! What did you come here for...”

Darkness opened the door with a bang and froze after seeing us.

No problem, we haven’t been exposed! Not exposed!

“B-big Boss! Stop shivering and get to work! No matter how strong the female crusader before us looks, there is no need to be surprised! We have something important to do for the sake of this kingdom!”

“T-t-that’s right Assistant-kun! We still have a job to do for the sake of this country. It might be shady, but this is definitely for a just cause!”

“That’s the way Big Boss! The people in this kingdom don’t realize how dangerous the accessory on Her Highness’ person is! Ara, if not for us, the Princess will be in danger!”

After hearing our dubious explanation, Darkness' face kept spasming. No problem, we haven't been exposed! Probably!

"Assistant-kun, let's charge in, we will apologize for it later!"

"That's right! We will be forgiven if we explain the situation after the fact!"

"Hey, hey...! W-what are the two of you..."

"What is the matter Darkness? I already told you plenty of times that you have to prevail verbally before fighting the battle."

Darkness was blocking my view so I couldn't see inside the room, but it seemed like Megumin was here too.

"Make way, it's just a couple of thieves, I will capture them! I have not recovered enough to use magic, but I am confident in a brawl! This afternoon, I even defeated three... de... linquents..."

After seeing us barge into the room, Megumin stopped swinging her staff.

No problem! It's salvageable!

Megumin was smart, even if she realized who we were, she wouldn't...!

"So, so cool...!"

I just needed to tell her the divine relic in Iris' possession was dangerous... Hmm...?

She was looking straight at my face and shaking with her cheeks flushed.

"What should I do, Darkness! This chivalrous thief really knows his stuff! Wearing such a cool mask and black attire! What about the name!? Is the name of the thieving group decided yet!?"

Seems like we were not exposed.

After the sparkly eyes Megumin grabbed Darkness' shoulders and shook her, she finally got it.

"... D-damn it, villain... Behind me is... As a member of House Dustiness, I..."

She squeezed out some lines meekly and took a weak stance.

Realizing what our intention was, she was willing to help us.

Darkness clenched her fist as if she was enduring something.

Oh no, how should I explain this to her later?

Forget it, for her own good, I should tie her up.

"Bind!"

I tied Darkness up with a skill. Darkness exhaled in relief after being bound.

This way, she could lie that she was no match for me and was subdued...

"Sacred Spell Break!"

Aqua's voice reverberated in the room.

The binding magic Darkness was under got dispelled, and the rope fell to the ground harmlessly.

“Too bad, but with me around, you all are finished! I don't know why you are here, but if I seize you two, I will get some great wine! As you can see, I can neutralize any spells! Just give up obediently!”

Aqua who was still cradling her wine bottle came out from the depths of the room.

Damn it, this thing was usually useless, and she just had to choose this moment to act competently, how infuriating!

Why did she always— always mess up my plans at the critical moment!

“Darkness, now's your chance! Apprehend them! Megumin became a coward for some reason, so it's all down to you now!”

Urged on by Aqua, the sulking Darkness raised her sword. I could hear the footsteps of the pursuers behind me.

“Big Boss, we can't stay too long because of that idiot here! Iris is right in there, we just need to charge in and use Steal...!”

“We can then steal the divine relic! But, your skill...”

That's right, I didn't know why, but when I use Steal against a female, I would steal their underwear.

At this moment, curses came from behind.

“Cut the web open! The objective of the villains is Her Highness Iris!”

There wasn't much time left.

It might hurt Iris, but in order to increase the odds of stealing the divine relic...!

“W-With my full powered horizontal slice, I will bury you ruffians!”

Darkness shouted and slashed weakly.

We dodged under the sword and pounced further into the room.

“Really, Darkness, why are you so stupid!? Why are you telling them your move! That's why you are known as a muscle head!”

“...Ugh.”

Darkness who was called stupid by the real idiot blinked back her tears.

Megumin who was standing by the side watched us with eyes of admiration as if I was the protagonist in a television drama...

After that, from the depths of the room we were targeting —

Iris had a rapier decorated elegantly in her right hand and her left hand stretched out our way. The ring on her finger sparkled, its white light increasing in intensity...!

“Intruders, I am a member of the powerful royal family and inherited the bloodlines of heroes! Don’t think you can... easily...”

Iris who was ready for battle opened her eyes wide after seeing us.

The light in her ring dimmed and her voice faded.

Now!

“Steal!” x2

Chris and I activated steal at the same time, grabbing something that was on Iris’ person.

“Are you alright? Princess Iris!”

At the same time, the voice of Claire came from behind.

Damn it, there was no time to confirm what we stole!

“Assistant-kun, head for the balcony! It’s a swimming pool down there, if we jump in there...!”

Chris went straight past Iris with something in hand and shouted!

“From what happened, I finally know your objective is that thing! I don’t know what that is, but don’t think you can take it away so easily!”

Aqua reached out towards Chris’ back.

This thing was still trying to get in the way at the very last moment!

“Seal—!!”

“Shit ahhhhhh!”

Chris and I leapt out of the terrace towards the dark swimming pool—!

Final Chapter: For the Sake of Becoming a Worthy Onii-sama

The next morning.

The capital was in upheaval after what happened last night.

That was expected since the legendary chivalrous thief duo stormed the castle and robbed the Princess' magic item by force.

And there were many powerful adventurers in the castle that night.

Legend about the exploits of the silver haired man and masked man exploded within the capital in an instant.

— And right now.

Something incredible was happening in the room I was in.

“D-d-darkness, please, calm down! There is a reason for this ahhhh! It's cracking it's cracking, my skull is going to explode!”

“Hey, listen to my explanation! After listening, you will understand that this is for a good cause! Please, listen to me first! I can't take it if you use any more strength, I'll die!”

“I will listen! I will listen alright!? Right, I am listening! This is just preparation before I listen to your explanation! I will judge after listening to your explanation whether I will strangle you two to death!”

Chris and I were called to a certain room in an inn, and were caught by her iron claw.

“Darkness, D-darkness! I can't talk! I can't talk like this!”

“Stop! I was coerced by Chris, the mastermind is the Big Boss Chris!”

After grabbing our temples and lifting us up, Darkness showed a stern expression.

“H-how can you say that! Hurts hurts! N-no, listen to me Darkness! Assistant-kun was really eager to do it! I was the one who proposed it, but when I wanted to withdraw after things blew up, Assistant-kun was the one who insisted we continue to break through!”

“That's not right, Big Boss! I only joined the thieving group for one day! I'm just a minion with no status in the organization!”

“What thieving group, it's just me and you! What hierarchy is there with just the two of us!?”

Forced to kneel on the floor with our temples grabbed tightly, Chris and I tried with all our might to push the responsibility to each other.

The furious expression on Darkness' face was not appeased.

“Hey.”

“!?” x2

Darkness said coldly while we were bickering.

“Spit it out.”

We told her what happened honestly.

“— You two are really... Why didn't you tell me? If you just told me about it clearly from the start, you wouldn't need to do something so foolish. I would definitely have helped the both of you.”

After hearing us out, Darkness sighed deeply.

“Even if you say that... That is a divine relic that can swap bodies alright? If used well, immortality would be possible. When I heard about this, I wanted to inform the big wigs too. However, Chris said the more authority a person has, the more they would crave for this, and even royalty would abuse this divine relic...”

“I-I thought it would be fine to tell Darkness! When I suggested asking Darkness for help, Assistant-kun said *‘Hey stop! Darkness is a noble, if Chris’ real identity is revealed to the nobles, she would be placed in a bad situation’* and so I changed my mind!”

“Ah! W-why, you!”

Seeing us bickering again, Darkness sighed.

“It's too late for that now. Luckily, only I know about the real identity of you two. Chris' silver hair is too prominent, you should leave the capital as soon as possible and return to Axel. Kazuma... return to the castle with me immediately.”

“Hmm!? ...Ah, you grabbed me too tightly just now, it still hurts! Sorry, let me rest here for a while...”

“Stop pretending to be retarded and follow me! We are going to pick up Aqua and Megumin, and bid farewell to Her Highness Iris.”

“Even if you say that, I don't dare go to the castle that is on high alert after last night...! There is no guarantee that things won't go wrong. If I am suspected and they bring out that lie detecting magic item, I will be done for!”

Chris scratched her cheeks with a wry smile as she watched me being dragged away and said:

“Well, work hard, Assistant-kun! And the divine relic has been sent to a place where it would never be stolen, so don't worry. I-I will make a move first...”

“... Wait, Chris.”

“!? W-what is it!?”

Chris' shoulders shivered as she was about to leave in a hurry.

“Is that all of your secrets? Do you have anything else you want to tell me?”

“... Ugh.”

“Seems like there is! So, what else are you keeping from me!? I knew you for a long time, I know your habits when you are in a pinch! That's right, you will scratch the scar on your cheek! Tell me quick! What secrets are you keeping from me!?”

Chris who was forced into a corner looked towards me for help.

No matter how much you looked... If I don't know what other secrets you have, I won't be able to help...

Chris pointed my way.

“Assistant-kun stole something other than the divine relic!”

“Ahhh! You traitor!!”

“You criminal scum! What else did you steal!? Now you are a real thief! Hand it over! What exactly did you steal!?”

I gave up resisting and handed a book to her.

Darkness started flipping it.

“Why you...”

She sat down onto the floor weakly. At this moment, Chris muttered to herself.

“Ah... Right, he stole that too.”

“Hmm?”

“... Oh? Is there something else?”

When she heard that, Darkness stood up again and reached out her hand.

Did I steal anything else?

What else was there?

“Oh, ahhh! And this thing too! Back then, I used steal on Iris...”

I handed the thing I got from Iris to Darkness.

It was a ring Iris was wearing.

When she was preparing to take on Chris and me, the ring glowed. It should be some sort of magic item.

Darkness frowned as she stared at the ring on my palm. And then—

“...!? Y-y-you...!? You actually stole that from Her Highness Iris!?”

“Yes, yes I did... What, don't be so alarmed, your shocked expression is scarier than your angry face! This isn't anything important right!? Hey, are you trying to intimidate me!?”

After staring at the ring for a while, she returned it to my hand gently.

“Listen well, Kazuma. Do not ever lose this ring you hear me? And don't let anyone know about this, keep it to your grave.”

“Hey don't say that! S-since it is something so important, I will just say that I happened to find this up on the street and return it okay!?”

“You fool! This is something the children of royalty will wear all the time, and will only be removed as a gift for their partner in marriage! Lying about it being picked up by an adventurer on the street after it was stolen, this preposterous lie is too...! ... Even if you return it out of goodwill, you will most likely be killed to keep the news from leaking out.”

“What the hell, that is scary! Ah, Chris! Where do you think you are going! Take responsibility for involving me in this troublesome problem, sneak into Iris’ room and return the ring!”

“That’s too scary! I don’t wanna! Why do you always steal something you shouldn’t with your skill! And Darkness, you have changed. You are actually thinking of hiding this. You were so inflexible in the past... are you more flexible in handling matters... But I have a feeling you have been poisoned deeply by Assistant-kun!”

“What...!? W-wait! I don’t feel that way! Did I really change!? Is it so bad that I don’t have time to worry about how much Princess Iris has been poisoned by Kazuma!?”

Ignoring Darkness who looked as if she suffered a huge blow, I held the ring under the sun.

“... Can’t be helped, I’ll bury it on the way back to the mansion, so no one will ever find it.”

“Don’t talk nonsense! That is something so important that Her Highness Iris keeps it with her all the time! So no matter what, you have to keep this ring on you and cherish it, also make sure no one ever finds it!”

“What kind of punishment game is this! Sigh, I understand. Then return that book to me. You can’t return that thing to the castle now anyway.”

“.....” x2

The two of them looked at each other when they heard that, not knowing what to say—

— I was a walking corpse after the hellish suffering I went through when I arrived at the castle together with Darkness,

“Hey, walk properly! How can you be so dejected before Princess Iris!”

“Eh... Oh... What... There’s no need to burn it... That was the only reward I got from silently saving the kingdom...”

“Stop complaining! How unsightly. The lighter you invented was put to good use back then. That is a great item.”

“I didn’t invent the lighter for that... Ugh... Ugh... My precious...”

The book I was planning to keep as my ultimate treasure was burned by these two. That’s why I was so dejected.

Chris will probably leave the capital before they start their manhunt for the silver haired thief.

She mentioned that she would return to Axel if she felt like it. We would definitely meet again.

Well, I had fun working together with Chris this time.

If my identity was exposed and I become a wanted criminal, I might consider forming a thieving band with her.

I thought about that as I walked behind Darkness. Finally, Darkness stopped in front of Iris' room.

“... If I bring you in when you are in such a condition, I think you will screw things up. I will explain about the divine relic, so you only need to stand there properly.”

“... Then why did you bring me along? My mental condition isn't stable right now, if you leave me alone, I might just do something in the castle.”

“Are you a kid!? It can't be helped, so you better not do anything unnecessary! I will explain the danger of that relic, and act out a scene, suggesting the idea that ‘the objective of the chivalrous thieves was to save Princess Iris’, that will be enough! Don't create any more problems!”

I pushed Darkness who kept reminding me about that and opened the door widely.

“Moron! Can't you even knock! ... Your Highness Iris, this is Dustiness here! I have something urgent to consult with you!”

When I entered the room with Darkness, inside was—

“Hmmp, with me around, there is nothing to worry about! That dangerous divine relic has been sealed by me and can't be used! So rest easy! And that thief really targeted something amazing huh!”

“As a magic item expert from the Crimson Magic Clan, I can guarantee that no one will be able to craft a divine relic of that level. This means that the incident is resolved!”

Megumin and Aqua who didn't really do anything kept talking arrogantly.

“As expected of Aqua-dono and Megumin-dono, we can finally rest easy! When I heard about the true powers of that magic item from Aqua-dono, my face turned green!”

Rain sighed in relief and smiled gladly.

“... Speaking of which, what could the motives of these thieves be? From their reputation, they don't seem to be people who will misuse the divine relic... Hmm? Lady Dustiness... and even this guy is here?”

Claire was as cold as ever.

Seemed like Aqua already explained the dangers of the divine relic to them.

“After their investigation, everyone knows how dangerous the divine relic is... We don't need to act anymore.”

Darkness who realized she didn't need to act anymore sighed in relief before Iris and the others.

“... Maybe the two of them were here to save me. They knew about the danger of that necklace, but were afraid that someone might target that divine relic if they told someone about it...”

Iris who was standing in the middle of the room surrounded by everyone said that. For some reason, she was staring straight at me...

... Could it be... She noticed my real identity as the thief?

“Princess Iris, that is unlikely. The citizens might hold the chivalrous thief in high regards, but they wouldn't take the risk to break into the royal castle for such a noble reason.”

Claire said as she shut her eyes vexingly.

“... If that is true, the two of them deserve our respect...”

She said softly with a vexed voice with a little respect mixed in.

My friendliness value for Claire that was rock bottom spiked up instantly.

“Speaking of which, just who are the two of them. I thought I had a good grasp of powerful adventurers, but I don’t know where they came from. Especially that masked man... I only faced off against him for an instant, but he broke my staff from a great distance in that short moment.”

Hmm, what was this feeling, her words really made me happy, maybe...

“That masked man huh! He is really cool right!? And that mask and all black clothes! It really moved me! Next time we meet, I will ask for his autograph!”

“Me-Megumin-dono, he is still a criminal... That might be so, but that masked chivalrous thief is really strong... He subdued Mitsurugi-dono in an instant even though he was unarmed, I heard he took out half the knights in the castle...”

Megumin and Claire sighed.

Oh no, what should I do, I really felt like telling them that cool guy was me!

“What’s the matter Kazuma? Why are you laughing so disgustingly.”

Aqua who was cradling the bottle just like yesterday said.

It seemed about time to take that bottle from her.

Claire glared at me at the same time.

“That’s right, what’s with your stupid grin. Such a pity, your chance to catch the chivalrous thief is gone... But even if you had the chance, you are no match for that masked man, sigh... Really, why is that masked man working as a thief, if he wasn’t a criminal, I would have taken him in... We will meet again one day...”

Towards the end, Claire’s face turned slightly red. This was the first time I saw her acting like a woman.

I really wish to know whether this person was praising me or speaking ill of me.

Darkness who was beside me had a weird expression and kept quiet.

...At that moment, Iris looked my way.

“That chivalrous thief, is really handsome!”

She said while staring straight at me.

Hmm, this...

Was my real identity...

“The following is my assumption... The two of them only took action because they are worried about me... Maybe, I have fallen for that chivalrous thief...”

Alright, I will confess my identity!

When Darkness realized that I was going to take out my mask from my backpack, she glared at me and restrained my hand.

To stop her from bothering me, I was going to use Drain Touch...!

“Where could he be right now... That, silver haired, leader...”

... I lowered my hand.

I knew this would happen!

After seeing my suspicious actions, Iris lowered her blushing face, and her shoulders were shaking slightly.

... Hey, was she laughing right now!?

Finally, Iris stopped trembling and lifted her head, looked at me straight in the eyes as I was feeling petty, and said in a voice that quivered a little: “... O-Onii-sama, I have a request.”

“Y-your Highness Iris?”

Claire who felt that something was wrong didn’t know what to say.

Aside from forcefully bringing me to the castle, Iris had never made any wilful request—

As if she had made up her mind, she clenched her fist and had a serious expression.

Just when she was about to say something—

“Princess Iris, please allow me to make a request first.” Darkness who was beside me suddenly interjected.

Everyone turned their gaze to Darkness who fell on one knee and threw me a glance.

“This Satou Kazuma has indeed defeated many Demon King Army bosses. And he might be the one who defeats the Demon King. Doing so would be very difficult, not something anyone could do... Can you give some words of encouragement to this brave one who is challenging this highly impossible obstacle?”

Me, defeat, what?

“... Defeat the demon king? Really? Onii-sama, are you planning to defeat the Demon King?”

You too Iris, why ask such a question with a serious face?

This sort of thing was of course...

“Eh, ah, if there is a chance, I might consider... subjugating... the Demon King...?”

As I looked into her eyes, my answer started to waver...

From behind me, I could hear the sneer of Claire.

However...

“Is that so... Onii-sama can surely do so. Please work hard in subjugating the Demon King... May Onii-sama be victorious in all your battles!”

Iris smiled cheerfully as she said that, and everyone fell silent.

— No, someone still wanted to say something.

“Stop it with the ‘Onii-sama, Onii-sama’! You already have your own blood related Onii-sama! Why are you so intimate with him!? You are weakening my reason for existing if you keep using that, it makes me mad! I will bury the Demon King then! No need for Kazuma to go!”

Megumin who got angry for some reason suddenly said something stupid.

“O-Onii-sama is Onii-sama! What’s wrong with me calling Onii-sama as Onii-sama! And it would be meaningless for you to defeat the demon king! I want Onii-sama to be the one who defeats him!”

“I tell you to stop with the Onii-sama and now you use it consecutively, are you looking for a fight!?”

“W-wanna fight!? R-Royalty are very strong!”

Darkness separated the two who were in each other’s face in a panic.

“Hey Megumin, stop! You had such a good relations with the Princess just yesterday, but you are quarrelling with her now!? What are you trying to do!”

“Your Highness Iris, please calm down! You have never quarreled with anyone before, why are you doing that so suddenly!?”

In order to get back on topic, I said to Iris who was panting hard:

“... Well then, what is your request? You can ask for anything.”

I had some hope for this request.

From her reaction just now, did she want me to continue staying in this castle...!”

“Request... My request is...”

She was the one who was making the request, but she seemed very hesitant.

“We have yet to settle the match for our game. Please do so with me one day, okay!?”

Like a child pulling a prank, she had a smile befitting her age.



Intermission: The Greedy Noble and the Broken Devil

In the musty cellar, the panting sound ‘Yee— Yee—’ could be heard intermittently.

No matter how many times I heard it, it still sounded disgusting.

“Hey, Max... Get up Max!”

After being kicked hard, the one who was panting got up nonchalantly.

“Yee— Yee— W-what is it, Alderp? You looking for me? Ah, your emotions are tasty today too, Alderp!”

Those words sounded like he was toying with me, so I kicked the devil before me subconsciously.

Devil.

That’s right, the disgusting man here was a devil.

If you look closely, he seemed to be a very handsome youth, but there was no emotions on his face as he kept pouting, giving an eerie air about him.

“If not for my problem, who would come to you... There is a job for you. My divine relic has been stolen by a thief and sealed. You are to get it back and unseal it, understand?”

“Yee— Yee— Alderp, Alderp! This is impossible, Alderp! I don’t know where the divine relic is, and it is normally impossible to seal them. If it is sealed, I can’t do anything about it...!”

I used all his strength to kick the devil who kept finding excuses.

“You can’t even do this, you piece of trash!? Just when are you going to grant my wish! Lalatina! You should have brought Lalatina over by now! Why can’t you even do something so simple!!”

“Yee— Yee— Yee— Yee—”

After being kicked a few times, the devil hugged his head and panted disgustingly.

Is this devil an idiot?

What a hopeless idiot.

He doesn’t have the ability to remember things, and will forget the orders given immediately/

Ahh... No matter the price, I have to get that divine relic back.

Things have been progressing too smoothly, so I got careless.

If I knew, I wouldn’t have aimed for the Prince’s body so aggressively.

— After setting up a marriage pact between Lalatina and the prince, I planned to take control of the Prince’s body and take everything I wanted into my hands.

The chance to grasp everything slipped away just like that.

In the end, a thief stole the divine relic out of nowhere.

Originally, I just needed to hand the relic to the Prince, chant the key phrase, destroy this body and the plan would work.

I regretted missing my chance, but the pressing matter right now was to find the relic.

Ahh, I should have swapped bodies with my son Walther...

If I don't get the relic back, the reason I adopted that kid would be gone.

I worked so hard to find a handsome and smart kid.

If the matchmaking with Lalatina worked back then, there wouldn't be a need to take such a big risk...!

"Lalatina! Lalatina! You are mine, Lalatina! So you know how long I have been watching you!? Lalatina!"

In the dim cellar, I shouted because of my fury of losing the divine relic.

"Yee— Yee—! Yee— Yee—! You are the best, Alderp! I really like the way you are true to your desires, and your cruelty! I really want to fulfil your wish as soon as possible and collect my price, Alderp! Come, give me work to do, Alderp! Tell me your desires quick, Alderp! Alderp!"

The disgusting devil started yelling.

What was with this guy?

He couldn't retain his memories at all, no matter how many times I repeated my wish, he would forget about it.

If he wasn't a 'free lunch' provider, granting my wish without paying the price, I would have summoned another devil long ago.

The rock in my hand...

The divine relic that could summon and command random monsters was held in my hand.

"I have only one wish! Bring me Lalatina! She belongs to me!"

I shouted my wish for the umpteenth time to the disgusting devil.

Epilogue 1: The Reward for the Hero

When the teleportation magic circle conjured by Rain disappeared, the surrounding became silent.

Without those few around, the difference was this huge. That was amazing.

“Your Highness Iris... Please don’t be too sad...”

Claire said to me as I stared at the place where the magic circle was.

“I understand that Your Highness had a happy and wonderful time when that guy came here. But... That guy lives in a different world from nobles after all. If you invest too much emotionally in a man, you will feel devastated when the time comes for you to marry. If you wish to scold me, please feel free to do so. But Princess, you have to understand...”

Claire then lowered her head deeply. I couldn’t see her eyes.

Rain who was besides her also lowered her head.

“I am fine, please raise your heads.”

The two of them lifted their heads slowly when they heard that.

Just from the pained expression from their faces, I understand how worried they were for me, and their resolve when they made their decision.

I didn’t hate them at all.

There was no reason to.

Lifting my hand into the air, I stared at my left fingers.

Only a part of the skin on my left ring finger was paler than the others.

Because I have worn this ring on my finger for a long time, and because I stayed under the sun for so long.

“...! M-my deep apologies! Because of my incompetence, your precious ring is...!”

“I am ready to take any punishment to make up for this mistake...!”

Seeing me looking at the mark where my ring used to be, the two of them became guilty.

However, I wasn’t feeling sad about my ring being stolen...

“The two of you had done your best. The thief managed to escape despite the congregation of powerful adventurers here. That’s why, no one could have stopped the ring from being stolen. When my father returns, I will ask him not to punish you two. That’s why, don’t treat this matter too seriously alright?”

When she heard that, Claire’s shrank her body further.

Claire was really competent, but too serious sometimes.

I think she should spend some time with him and learn how to be more flexible.

That's right, just like Lalatina.

“Thank you for your clemency, Princess... Not only did you lose your important ring, you have to be apart from that person... Your Highness Iris, if that guy manages to vanquish a Demon King Army Boss again, you can meet him again...”

Claire consoled me with a complicated expression.

— Vanquishing a Demon King Army Boss.

This was a demanding task, but to him, it was just a walk in the park.

“You are right, I think that I will meet him again soon.”

After replying with a smile, Claire's expression twisted in pain.

At this moment Rain said in a very cheerful voice to encourage me: “By the way, after seeing how Princess Iris was acting, I thought you would say something wilful when you parted with Kazuma-sama, and had steeled myself for that... But you handled it smoothly. I was worried about Kazuma-sama's negative influence, but thankfully, you didn't behave that way.”

The atmosphere lightened in an instant.

“After all, I already made a promise with Onii-sama.”

I said to the two of them with a smile.

“Promise... Ah, you mean the part about settling the match next time? Your Highness, you must defeat that man alright!?”

Claire remembered another promise, but...

— Since ancient times, this kingdom had a custom.

The hero who defeated the Demon King and return victoriously will earn the right to take the Princess as his wife—

... I looked at the mark where my ring was once again, and said in a volume they couldn't hear.

“I hope... Onii-sama keeps that ring carefully.”

Epilogue 2: The Dream Reposed in the Ring

With Rain's teleport, we returned to Axel, our home.

"Aaahhhhhh!"

I pounced onto the couch and screamed as I rolled around.

Darkness took a glance at me, then sat on the chair besides the couch and started sipping tea.

"Hey, you are noisy. You will disturb the neighbours, go to the suburbs if you want to shout."

"Stop joking with me, bitch! You are always getting in my way during the crucial moments! If you didn't bring up something stupid like the 'Demon King', Iris would have requested for something else! Like wanting to be together with Onii-sama, wanting to date Onii-sama, wanting to sleep with Onii-sama or something!"

"You just said something incredible! Don't forget that Princess Iris is just twelve!! And she wouldn't make these requests, at the most, she would ask you to be the official court jester. Also, you only live together with Her Highness for just a week!? Why are you so confident that you have won her heart in such a short time? Face reality... Here, I made some tea for you, drink it and calm down."

"Don't pull me away from my fantasy life with the Princess so suddenly! I don't want to hear your logic! We just bided farewell, give me some buffer time to get over it!"

Megumin glanced at our bickering sideways, and sat down on my other side.

"You too, Megumin, I know you have a short temper, but that last quarrel wasn't necessary right?"

"That was just an unavoidable battle between fellow little sister type characters, and I don't want to lose either. Actually, things were going fine when I went out on a trip with the Princess. However, we didn't finish the task we set out to do because she picked a fight with ruffians. That is a farewell gift that fits my style, right?"

I wanted to retort '*you are the Loli type, not the little sister type*', and '*don't teach the Princess weird things*'. By the way, she had grown really close to Iris before I realized it.

They were about the same age, so they should be something like friends.

It was probably painful for her to bid farewell to her friend.

I took the tea Darkness offered me as I thought. Right then, Megumin took out a piece of paper and started writing quickly.

I took a look, and it seemed to be a letter for someone.

It must be for Iris.

As I drank my tea, I smiled wryly at her actions that weren't honest at all.

Aqua couldn't wait a moment longer as she took some wine glasses from the kitchen, placed the bottle and glasses on the table and sat down on the couch.

“Megumin, what are you writing? ... I know, it must be a letter to the Princess huh? After the party ended last night, you even went to her room and chatted with her a while. She even addresses you as Megumin-Nee, I think you two are really close.”

In response, Megumin continued writing with a serious face.

“Wrong, this is a fan letter, so I can give it to that masked chivalrous thief if I ever meet him in the future.”

Darkness and I sprayed the tea in our mouths out.

“Hack...! Cough...! M-Megumin, just what do you like about that masked thief? A fan mail isn’t appropriate right? That guy is a criminal.”

Seemed like Darkness wasn’t planning to tell her the true identity of that chivalrous thief was me.

“I really like him though. After all, not many people have such taste in this day and age. Even in the eyes of the Crimson Magic Clan, that strange attire was out of this world. And they were invincible in their rampage through the castle with just the two of them, I even thought of standing on their side. This is not a love for the opposite sex, but the feeling of wanting to cheer for a hero I looked up to.”

... Oh no, now I don’t dare to say that chivalrous thief was me.

With a crisp ‘pop’, the living room was filled with a mild fragrance.

Aqua seemed to have opened the bottle.

“Hey, that smells nice, give me some too.”

“... You mean ‘*Aqua-sama, please spare a little wine for this humble one*’ — right?”

... I decided, I will take it from her.

As I stood up to take the bottle from her, Aqua cocked it in a panic and hugged it tightly, balling herself up like a hedgehog.

“Hey, stop your futile resistance! Just give in!”

“No! Please! Spare me! Please, I will do anything!”

From the viewpoint of the bystanders, Aqua was acting as if I was going to do something cruel to her.

I shook the shoulders of Aqua who was balled up violently. At this moment, Darkness rubbed the insides of her thighs together as she tapped my shoulder with a flushed face.

“... I am willing to pay, let me enjoy that kind of play...”

“Play your ass! You were so cool in the castle, and now you become like this! ... Damn, hey Aqua!”

I offered a compromise to the stubborn Aqua.

“I will go find the delicious wine from Michael-san that is even praised by the capital. Then we will make a bet with our wines. You did well for this incident too, so I will give you a handicap on how we will bet.”

When Aqua heard that, she lifted her head in a hurry and stared at my face.

“... Really? Kazuma is so eager to have a bet with me on who to buy the wine? There must be something up your sleeve.”

It seemed that she could still learn from her mistakes.

But if this went on, I will still win. I came prepared.

“Look, no matter what you say, we still resolved a crisis in the capital right? And we made it back home safely, which is cause for celebration. After all, one bottle is not enough for the three of us.”

“Wait a minute, you said bottle for three, so you are planning to let me drink juice alone! And what do you mean by return safely, didn’t Kazuma die to Kobolds!?”

“S-shut up, you! In the end I am still alive, and that’s good enough! And it is still too early for Megumin to drink! I will buy some nice ice cold Neroid, so just make do with that.”

When Megumin’s age was mentioned, Megumin smacked at the letter she was writing halfway.

“I am old enough to marry! What’s wrong with drinking a little wine!? Want to have a match to see who can drink more!?”

As expected of a different world. Speaking of which, Megumin was old enough to wed.

“Hey hey, Megumin, it’s better not to drink... but a celebration... Indeed, we stopped the conspiracy of some schemer out there. Alright, I will cook up some snacks. Since we returned safely, it isn’t bad to hold a victory party.”

Darkness got up after saying that and went to the kitchen.

Aqua started fidgeting when she heard the term ‘party’.

“... Hey, Kazuma hasn’t been back for more than a week, so forget about betting, I will bring some of my wine out and share it with everyone.”

Aqua placed the bottle on the table again after saying that.

‘You got away this time’— I thought about saying that, but endured it. It was a rare occasion for everyone to be in the mood for a drink.

It was just for a short time, but many things happened. I met a cute younger sister, and had to bid her farewell. Today, I will...

“Well then, I will buy the wine. If I let Kazuma go, I think I will end up drinking Neroid.”

Megumin said, and then rushed out of the room.

Shortly later, the fragrance of dishes came out from the kitchen.

“The snacks are ready, we just need some tricks to hype up the mood...”

After returning to our normal life, the days I spent in the castle seemed to feel like a dream.

Did I really lived for some time together with the Princess...?

And she called me Onii-sama, and even looked up to me...

To prove to myself that wasn't a dream, I took out the ring and stared at it with deep emotions—

At this moment, Aqua who was looking for things to perform her tricks noticed the ring.

“Ah, hey Kazuma, can I borrow that ring for a moment? I will show you an amazing trick.”

Seeing Aqua reached for the ring, I kept it in a hurry—!